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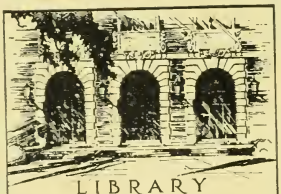

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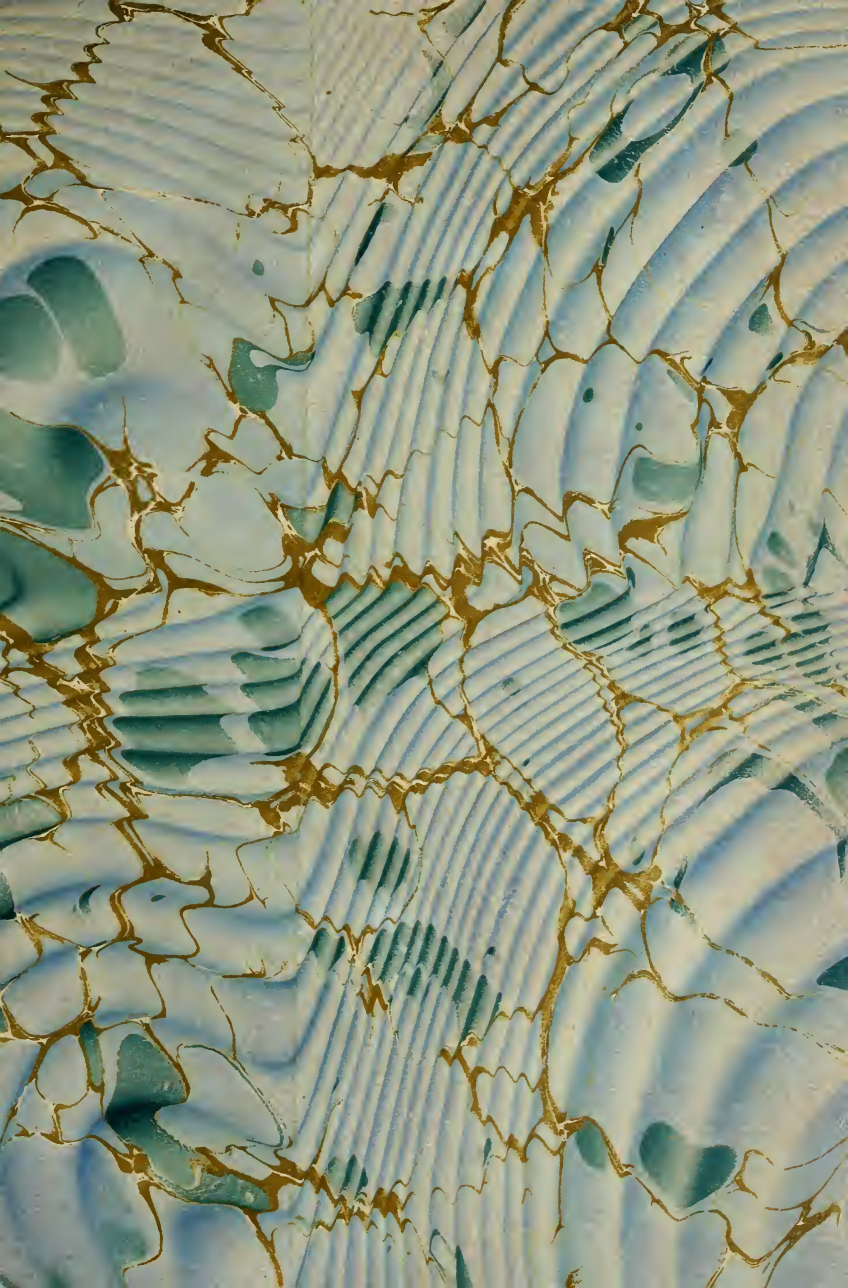

TO RIGHT THE WRONG

VOL. II.

TO RIGHT THE WRONG

BY

EDNA LYALL

AUTHOR OF

"DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "KNIGHT-ERRANT,"
"IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," ETC.

But were it the meanest under-service, if God by His secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back.—MILTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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TO RIGHT THE WRONG.

CHAPTER I.

Yet deem not, on such parting sad
Shall dawn no welcome dear and glad:
  Divided in their earthly race,
Together at the glorious goal,
Each leading many a rescu'd soul,
  The faithful champions shall embrace.

KEBLE.

A MINUTE later the door was re-opened by William Denham.

"What on earth can have put Sir Thomas in such a rage?" he exclaimed to himself. "He well-nigh overturned me in his blind fury, and then what would have become of these newts I've been at such pains to catch? Ho! Arthur! are you stirring in there?"

He flung back the half-opened door of the inner room, and started a little on finding himself confronted by Joscelyn.

"I beg your pardon," exclaimed the lad. "They did not tell me you were here."

The prisoner looked so unapproachable that Will Denham's sole thought was to beat a hasty retreat, to flee from a trouble which he could not understand, to escape somehow from the stern—almost haughty—gravity of the Parliamentarian. But it was a case of more haste less speed, for he slipped on the polished floor and came down with an ignominious crash, breaking to bits the wide-necked bottle he held in his hand.

"Good Lord!" he cried in great disgust, as he struggled up, soaked with water and covered with bits of glass, "there seems to be a fate against these creatures."

His frantic dashes after the newts, which darted off in all directions, utterly broke down Joscelyn's gravity; the sudden reaction was too strong, and he burst out laughing, entering with spirit into the newt hunt, and not resting till they were all

recaptured. By that time the ice was completely broken between the two.

"Where did you get them?" he asked.

"In the meadows. Do you know the river here?"

"Yes, indeed; Dick and I have fished there many a time."

"Did you ever find newts there?"

"No. What do you get them for?"

"I want to experiment on them. They say you can work miracles on them."

"How can that be?" said Joscelyn, interested with this new idea.

"Why, they say you can freeze them solid and keep them frozen any time you like, and then, by just the right amount of heat, bring them to life again."

"Do you try many of these experiments?"

"As many as there is time for," said Will Denham. "But this hateful war spoils most of one's chances of collecting. I have some fine spiders, though; come here and see them. You've no idea till you have lived with them what a lot of character there is in a spider. See this one to the

left! We call him Pym, because he is crafty. That lean fellow in the web in the corner we call Falkland, because he is such a recluse, and this handsome one in the right-hand window-pane is Prince Rupert, because he is daring and makes many prisoners. I have a cage full of mice in the ante-room. Arthur won't have them in here—declares they smell—such nonsense! I don't know what he will say to them to-night if he has to sleep in the outer room."

"Better put all your prisoners in here together," said Joscelyn, with a smile.

"I forgot you were our prisoner," stammered the boy. "I—I wish you had been on the right side. When they said in church that they were bringing in a Roundhead officer to the governor, I looked to see some sour-faced, cropped, canting hypocrite, and could scarce believe my eyes."

"We have some cropped hypocrites," said Joscelyn, with a wrathful recollection of Original's desertion. "And you Royalists have some licentious effeminate Cavaliers with scented lovelocks, but the bulk of each

party is made up of brave and honourable men."

He was interrupted by the entrance of Arthur Denham.

"I have brought your brother to see you," he said, and the words were hardly out of his mouth before Dick had rushed impetuously past him and thrown himself on Joscelyn's neck.

"At last I can get to you!" said the boy. "What on earth did you say to my father? He is walking to and fro in the hall like a madman, cursing you till the very serving-men are aghast! 'Tis horrible to hear him."

"He urged me to change sides; when I showed him that it was an impossibility, he disowned me and cursed me. And you? Have you come to argue?"

"Heaven forbid!" said Dick. "For God's sake, don't look at me like that, Joscelyn, or you'll break my heart. Surely you can trust me."

For a minute Joscelyn did not reply; his whole face quivered.

"I do, Dick—I can," he said, huskily.

For some little while nothing more passed between them; they just sat there side by side in the fading light of that November afternoon, heedless of their differences, mindful only that they were together after months of separation. Presently they told each other of all that they had been through, and Dick heard with keen interest of the march to Kineton, of the night on the battle-field, and of the rescue of Robin the groom.

"We had given the poor varlet up for dead," he said. "But maybe after all he will have reached Shortell in safety before us."

"You were on your way home?" asked Joscelyn, with a sigh.

"Ay; we shall have to go on to-morrow; to-night 'tis impossible, for Jervis is dead drunk. My father intends to stay at home to keep Christmas, but Jervis and I shall but stay two or three days, and perchance another few days at Bletchingley before joining Sir Ralph Hopton's army at Winchester."

Home! Christmas! Winchester! The happy old school-days! A crowd of bitter-sweet memories filled Joscelyn's mind, and with them a wretched sense of isolation. Had it not been for the thought of Clemency he could have wished to die then and there, so hateful to him was the idea of being ranged against his own kith and kin. But there was Clemency to cheer his loneliness; there was a brave woman's heart to strengthen him in the terribly painful life which from a sense of duty he had chosen.

"Dick," he said, "if you go to Bletchingley, will you do something for me? 'Tis not concerned with our unhappy differences. I would not ask you to do aught that was not honourable. Do you remember Sir Robert Neal's grand-daughter?"

"What, pretty Mistress Clemency? Could any man forget her?"

"You will forgive me when I make her your sister-in-law?"

"Ho, ho!" laughed Dick. "Is that the way the land lies?"

"We were betrothed but four days since,"

pausing a little as though to enjoy the sound of the words. But the happy light in his eyes soon faded. "I parted from her only yesterday morning," he said. "Great God! only yesterday, and it seems like half a lifetime—how shall we ever endure the waiting?"

"Courage! 'Twill pass better than you think!" said Dick.

"You speak as if you knew all about it," groaned Joscelyn, half amused, half angry.

"Well, well," said Dick, "one can draw upon one's imagination at times. 'Tis all a matter of imagination, you know, according to the play which says the lover and the lunatic and the poet are all birds of a feather."

"Then since you with your imagination affect to be neither poet nor lover, you must be the lunatic," said Joscelyn, laughing. "But look, Dick, an you love me, ride over to Katterham when you are at Bletchingley —'tis but a matter of a few miles—and bear Clemency the latest news of me."

"Now, by my troth," said Dick, "I will do no such thing unless you give me a letter to deliver to her. Would you have me say, 'Fair lady, I fell foul of your true love in Farnham Street, took him prisoner, and clapped him into the Castle, where he now remains, eating his heart out'?"

"The arrest was none of your doing, said Joscelyn. "But if they will let me have pen and paper I will only too gladly give you a letter to take to her. Oh, Dick! Dick! to think that you are free to go to her, while I stay chafing here! 'Tis enough to madden a man! But you must not let her think me impatient. You must make light of it all. Do you understand? Say that I am in comfortable quarters, courteously treated, and with the kindest of gaolers, or she will be picturing dungeons and chains, and horrors untold. Dick, I must show you her picture."

Unfastening his vest, he drew forth a miniature set in pearls which was fastened by a ribbon round his neck.

"It was painted but a few months ago,"

he said. "Sir Robert gave a similar one to Faith, the sister who was married in July, and this one he gave me when I left Katterham yesterday."

Dick gazed in silence for some minutes at the strangely-beautiful face; there was about it an expression of strength, of repose, and the uplifted eyes seemed to be looking right into heaven, so pure, so calm, so full of satisfied desire were they.

"She is"—the word "beautiful" trembled on his lips—but he hesitated, for after all it was not the beauty of feature which had specially appealed to him. "She is divine!" he said, with a long breath.

"You will bless me for giving you the chance to serve her," said Joscelyn, his face aglow with happiness as he felt the comfort of his brother's sympathy, and the rapture of possessing Clemency's love.

"That will I," said Dick. "But at all costs we must keep the knowledge of this from Jervis. 'Twas a mercy he did not come across this miniature when he searched

you for the despatches. Why did you not tell me of this at Shortell?"

"There was nothing at that time to tell," said Joscelyn.

"What! you did not fall in love with her during those weeks at the Court House? Impossible! St. Anthony himself would have succumbed."

"I marvel myself how it was," said Joscelyn. "But I think I looked on her then more as if she were an angel. 'Twas she who helped and served me—she who had that love of our country which I had not then grasped; she was my heavenly messenger, and I never once dreamed of her as my wife. But when my turn came to serve and shield her, when I knew that she needed my strength and that a great danger threatened her, then—then I loved her. It was the night of the attack on the Court House, and I thank God that my baptism of fire was in defending her."

Dick listened with a sort of envy to the whole story, understood what Joscelyn must have suffered during those months of silence,

heard of old Mr. Gainsborough's bequest with keen satisfaction, listened with sympathy to all that Joscelyn could tell of those last happy days at Katterham. The room had gradually grown quite dark, but they neither of them cared for that, talking all the more freely perhaps in consequence. So absorbed were they that they found it hard to bring themselves back to the present when Arthur Denham entered, lamp in hand.

"Will you not come down to supper?" he said, addressing his prisoner. "Sir Thomas will take nothing more to-night, and has already gone to his bed-chamber, but the governor hopes you will both join us in the banqueting-hall."

Joscelyn, cheered by his interview with Dick, began to remember that he had tasted nothing since early morning, and ended by making a hearty meal. Afterwards, what with writing his letter to Clemency and talking with Dick, the hours of the night passed quickly away; it was not till day was breaking that either of the brothers

slept, and Arthur Denham had much ado to rouse them at eight o'clock, when Sir Thomas insisted on leaving the Castle.

"Will you bid your father farewell?" he asked, doubtfully, as he ushered the two down the winding stair and into a corridor which ran parallel with the great hall.

"I will await his wishes," said Joscelyn, "but I do not think he will see me. Dick, do not forget the message with which I charged you for Rosamond. You and I had best part here."

"Here in this prison?" cried Dick, impatiently. "'Tis hateful to part here, leaving you in such a plight. When and where shall we meet again?"

"In better times, let us hope, or maybe in another world," said Joscelyn, choking back his emotion as he saw that Dick was on the verge of breaking down. In silence they embraced each other, conscious of a dread likelihood that it was for the last time; then Dick followed Arthur Denham, and Joscelyn, turning away, paced the long corridor with a heavy heart. A

sound of voices roused him from his sad thoughts.

"And, pray, why should I see him?" said Sir Thomas. "I have disowned him—he is naught to me now!"

Joscelyn drew back the piece of tapestry hanging in the corridor and found himself standing by a low wooden balustrade, raised a few feet above the level of the great hall, and not far from the hearth. In bitterness of soul he watched the group standing below on the white flagstones—Sir John courteous, bland, a trifle sarcastic; Arthur Denham doing his best to console poor downcast Dick; Will absorbed in watching the gambols of a pair of spaniel pups; Jervis just visible through the open door kissing a rosy-cheeked kitchen-wench, and his father standing hat in hand thanking the governor of the Castle for his hospitality.

The courteous thanks, however, broke off abruptly, for as he took a last glance round the old hall, Sir Thomas suddenly perceived that the tapestry hanging, representing the reconciliation of Joseph and his brethren,

was partly drawn aside, and in the place where Joseph should have been, stood the vigorous muscular form so familiar and, spite of all, so dear to him. His rugged old face began to work; a mist stole over his eyes; in dead silence he turned and left the Castle, moving like a man in a dream.

CHAPTER II.

There is no true potency, but that of help; nor true ambition, but ambition to save.—Ruskin.

Behind the stables at Shortell Manor, and looking down a broad grassy slope to the moat, there stood a wood-shed, where faggots were stored and logs chopped for the household fires. Barnaby, the gatekeeper, too old and rheumatic for much work, took his daily exercise in this shed, and Rosamond loved to steal down and keep him company. She liked the smell of the wood, and she liked watching the old man's vigorous strokes, and listening to his cheery talk between-whiles. On this particular November day she had come to him, as so often before, for comfort; and the old man partly understood the reason that her face

was wan and tear-stained, and her eyes inclined to fill every now and then, as she sat on the last remains of the trunk of an old oak tree, playing with Cymro's long, soft ears.

"You are wishing that Master Dick could have stayed longer?" said Barnaby, resting his hatchet on the block for a minute and glancing at his little companion.

"Yes," said Rosamond, "and that his stay had not been spoilt. I thought at least his return would have been happy, yet you see he brought us this heavy news of Joscelyn. Barnaby, I am weary of troubles; I should like to be just altogether happy, if it were but for one day."

"To be free from trouble altogether is not for us here, I take it," said Barnaby. "The dumb beasts seem often without trouble, and maybe the angels, but we betwixt-and-between folk must take things mixed."

"'Twould not be so hard if I could travel about like the rest of them. Every one goes save me. There are Dick and Jervis gone

to-day to Bletchingley, and my father riding over to see Sir Toby and arrange about Isabella's betrothal, and my mother and Isabella gone in the coach to my Lady Blount's. They will not return till Friday, and 'tis so lonesome at the house."

"And on the morrow even I shall have to be leaving," said Barnaby. "I must go to Farnham market to sell the spotted cow."

"To Farnham?" cried Rosamond. "Oh, Barnaby, take me with you. Dear Barnaby, pray do. I could ride there on a pillion, and there is no one to say me nay."

"But you would be no nearer Master Joscelyn there than here," said Barnaby, "for is he not a prisoner?"

"He is not kept a close prisoner, Dick said; I might perchance see him in the park which is so close to the Castle. Barnaby, I think I shall die if you don't take me—I truly do think it."

Her look was so beseeching that it would have needed a much more unyielding man than the gatekeeper to resist her.

"I do not know what my lady would say to it," he objected. "A market-day is not the day for a young maid like you to be seen in the town. And how am I to wait on you when I have the spotted cow to sell?"

"Let Robin ride over with us," said Rosamond, her face lighting up as if some happy inspiration had just come to her. "Robin is quite strong enough now to ride, and you know that he would do anything to pleasure me just from gratitude to Joscelyn. While you go to the cattle-market Robin can take me to the park, and who knows but we may see Joscelyn there! Now, Barnaby, say you will take me."

After some little protesting and a good deal of cajoling on the child's part, Barnaby consented, and Rosamond, with dancing eyes, ran off in search of Robin the groom, who about a week ago had arrived at Shortell. His wound was healed, but he still looked white and haggard with all that he had been through, and his wife,

who kept house for Barnaby, protested that she was glad enough he did look "peaked," otherwise Master Jervis would have taken him off again to the wars. "Whereas now, Mistress Rosamond, his father and me will keep him here through the winter, thanks to the ball that hit him at Edge Hill, and to Master Joscelyn's saving of him."

"Robin," said Rosamond, as the wife retired to the house to finish her washing, "do you think for love of my brother Joscelyn you would run some little risk?"

"Ay, mistress, that would I," said Robin; "I would cut off my right hand for him if 'twould serve his turn."

"Then listen to my plan," said Rosamond. "Early to-morrow your father starts for Farnham market; he has promised to take me with him. I want you to ride over with us: my pillion had best be on your horse. Then, while Barnaby drives his bargain over the cow, you shall take me to the park, fastening the horse up at one of the gates. I will rest under the trees for a while,

and you, being a wounded soldier fresh from Edge Hill, will surely contrive by hook or by crook to make friends with some of the garrison at the Castle, and either to get speech with my brother or send him word to come without fail to the great hawthorn nigh to the south-west gate of the park."

Robin thought the idea might well be carried out. But Rosamond had more to follow.

"Will you keep a secret, Robin? Listen; that is not all I want. If it should happen that the horse disappeared from the park gate—disappeared in a good cause I mean—could you bear a little blame, do you think? I would take the worst share, but some might perchance fall on you."

"Never fear for the blame, mistress," said Robin, looking perplexed. "But how would you get home again? Besides, the town be far too quiet for horse-stealers and such-like."

Rosamond laughed with delight at having mystified him.

"Never fear, Robin, I could walk if need

be, or ride behind Barnaby. As long as you are willing to risk the blame all will be well, and who knows but the horse may come home safe and sound! You undertake to get that message to the Castle and I will contrive the rest."

Rosamond slept little that night. For once in her life she really was unfeignedly happy, for was she not planning Joscelyn's rescue? and surely, surely such a well-arranged scheme could not miscarry.

Warmly wrapped in her blue pelisse and velvet hood, she jogged along the country roads on her pillion, steadying herself by Robin's red belt, and exchanging many a joke with Barnaby, who rode beside them, while behind them the herd-groom drove the spotted cow to market. It was a mild, still autumn day, the morning mist had lifted, and the soft blue sky made a lovely background for the delicate tracery of branch and twig as they rode under the bare trees in the forest. Rosamond sang for sheer happiness, now crooning to herself the "Bailiff's Daughter," now breaking out glee-

fully into "Under the Greenwood Tree." Even when they came to Farnham, and she remembered Dick's description of the struggle outside the Plough Inn, she was too much excited to look with anything save curiosity at the gabled house, with its quaint entrance-steps and balustrade; and in realising her nearness to Joscelyn she forgot to shudder at the thought of the way in which he had been dragged along West Street only a few days before. Parting with Barnaby at the market-place they rode leisurely up Castle Street and turned along the quiet alley which led to one of the park gates. Here Robin lifted her off the horse, and Rosamond, trembling with eagerness, made her way up the grassy slope till she came to the thorn tree which she had chosen for a trysting-place. Cymro stretched himself out on the turf beside her, and in an agony of impatience she waited for about an hour, her eyes fixed on that part of the Castle which was visible from the park. At length the dog started up from a doze, raised his head in the air, pricked up his

ears, and finally bounded up the hill, uttering short barks of delight. Rosamond sprang to her feet; she was stiff and aching in every bone, but what did that matter? for Joscelyn was coming—Joscelyn, whom she had not seen since that summer evening when he had bade her farewell in the arbour at Shortell.

"Rosamond!" he cried in amazement, as he strode down the hill to meet her, "how in the world did you get here?"

For a minute she could not speak, but clung to him, trembling from head to foot.

"You dear little sister," he said, kissing her again and again. "What good fairy sent you here to cheer me just when I was in the depths of despair?"

"'Twas no fairy," said Rosamond, beginning to laugh. "'Twas I that planned it all, and Barnaby and Robin that brought me. But we must not lose time. No one knows the rest of the plan save me. I have come to set you free, Joscelyn; you must take the horse you will find yonder at the gate. Do not stay to talk to me, but fly

while there is time! Go now at once, before any one disturbs us!"

With softening eyes Joscelyn looked into the eager childish face raised to his.

"You dear little soul!" he said, tenderly, "did you indeed plan all this for me?"

"Nothing ever made me so happy," said Rosamond. "But, oh, Joscelyn, do not linger. Come now, come at once; you can unfasten the pillion, and Barnaby can put that by and by on his horse. Come!" Snatching his hand, she tried to draw him down the grassy slope, but Joscelyn drew her back and, spreading his cloak on the turf, made her sit down beside him.

"Wait," he said, putting his arm round her. "How can I make you understand? Your plan was so well thought out! I hate to think of the risks you have run for me, yet I love you a thousand times more for your courage and your loving little plot."

"Pray, pray come," urged Rosamond. "Why do you linger? why do you hold me so fast?"

"It is because I am grieved to disappoint you, dear. But I cannot escape."

Her face fell so terribly that he paused to kiss her with a reverence which he had never before felt for his little playfellow.

"You see," he continued, "it is impossible, for I am on parole. Otherwise, of course, I should not be allowed to walk in the park."

"But prisoners always try to escape. Could it be wrong to try?" she pleaded. "King Richard escaped when Blondel found him."

"He had not given his word—had not made any promise not to get free—there's the difference. Were it not that it would be against my honour I would do as you wish. But you no longer wish it for me. You would not have me break my word."

Rosamond burst into tears.

"I would!" she said, passionately. "What is a word—a promise—compared to your safety? I don't know what you mean by honour—'tis nothing real—'tis but a name."

"'Tis the most real thing within us," he

said, quietly, "the most divine. 'Tis the sense of perfect justice."

"True," said a voice behind him. He looked up and saw Arthur Denham.

"In good time here is my gaoler," said Joscelyn, smiling. "Denham, allow me to present you to my little sister Rosamond."

Rosamond sprang to her feet in great alarm, catching sight through her tears of some one tall and dark towering above her.

"Oh!" she cried, "do not be angry with him: it was no plan of his. It was mine, all mine. The horse is waiting at the gate and I begged him to escape, but he will not. Pray, pray believe me, he quite refused to go."

For answer, Arthur stooped and kissed her wet cheek.

"You see he is the last man to do a dishonourable thing," he said. "You had not thought of the right and wrong of the case."

Rosamond wiped away her tears that she might see this gentle-voiced gaoler.

"But," she urged, "Jervis says that all is fair in love and war."

"Yes," said Arthur Denham; "and apparently he thinks so. But the truest men on either side do not think that, and if my prisoner had taken your suggestion and escaped just now, he would most likely have ceased to be your hero."

"He could not have done it," said Rosamond, in a sad, meek little voice. "I see now, I begin to understand about the justice, but"—with a rising sob—"Oh, Joscelyn, I'm so dreadfully tired!"

"You dear, brave little maid, what can I do for you?" said Joscelyn, in perplexity. "The fewer that know of your being here the better, or I would beg the governor's hospitality for you—but——"

"Let me fetch food and wine for her," said Arthur Denham.

"I am not hungry," said Rosamond, "and there is food in the saddle-bags—three venison pasties and a manchet. They were for your journey, and now you will not want them."

At this dismal thought she utterly broke down, and cried as if her heart would break.

"We will eat them together here, then," said Joscelyn, cheerfully. "Whoever heard before of a prisoner picnicking in a park!"

She was soon coaxed back to serenity, and the three ended by having a very merry luncheon under the hawthorn.

"I shall have pleasant memories of Farnham Park," said Joscelyn, laughing. "At the other end of it I spent my first night in the open, that August Sunday when I left you. Who would have thought that in four months' time you and I should be together here!"

"And oh, how surprised the others would be could they see us!" said Rosamond. "They are all away to-day staying at my Lady Blount's, for Isabella is to be betrothed to Sir Toby, and my father has gone to arrange about the settlements."

"Ho! that affair has come off, has it?" said Joscelyn.

"Nurse says that my Lady Blount was set on his marrying a Heyworth, and I am right glad that I was too young."

"Will you wait for me?" said Arthur

Denham, looking half mirthfully, half tenderly at the winsome little face with its halo of golden hair.

Rosamond looked him over from head to foot with a child's innocent scrutiny.

"Sir Toby is dressed up and finikin, but I think I could like you; only you are Joscelyn's enemy. It would not do for us to marry."

"I am not his enemy save on questions of State; otherwise we are good friends," said Arthur. "Remember, I shall expect you to wait for me. And in the meantime you must give me a keepsake."

"But I have naught to give you," said Rosamond, with profound gravity.

"You might spare one of these," said Joscelyn, drawing the sunny curls from under the hood. "And now we speak of it, I too would have one. Come, Denham, out with your sword; you must be executioner. Steady, Rosamond; I will hold both ends, and he shall not behead you. There! mine shall be placed with Clemency's picture."

"Oh! Joscelyn, show me, do show me

her miniature. Dick told me," cried Rosamond, far more intent on her brother's marriage than on her own possible future.

Arthur Denham wandered off, leaving the brother and sister to an uninterrupted talk about Clemency and all that had passed at Katterham. When he rejoined them he found Joscelyn already persuading the child not to risk a longer stay.

"How long will you be kept prisoner?" she asked, falteringly, as they led her down the steep slope to the gate.

"Till the fortune of war releases me," said Joscelyn; "it may be for weeks or for months or—— But when I am free I will come and see you, never fear. Barnaby will house me, doubtless, and bear a message to you. Why, there he is, and Robin too. May I speak with them?"

Arthur Denham gave permission, and tried hard to win a smile or a word of recognition from Rosamond. But she had no thoughts save for Joscelyn, and it was on him that her blue eyes rested with a long wistful gaze, as she looked back from her pillion

before passing out of sight of the park gate.

"Heyworth," said Arthur, as they went back to the Castle, "as surely as you and I climb this hill now together, I have seen my future wife. If I cannot have fair Rosamond, I'll have none other."

"Why, man alive, how can you tell yet?" said Joscelyn, smiling. "She is a mere child of twelve—nay, just thirteen."

"What of that? I can wait. And after all, by the time she is seventeen I shall be but five-and-twenty. By then our unhappy differences may be at an end, and you perhaps will be willing to put up with such an alliance."

"Faith, I could wish nothing better for the child," said Joscelyn. "She has always been neglected and harshly treated at home, and an early marriage will be the best hope for her. I only hope this journey to Farnham will not get her into trouble; if it should ever reach my mother's ears Rosamond will be severely punished."

Arthur looked troubled.

"It was certainly a rash plan," he said. "Yet I cannot regret her attempt. Nothing could more plainly have revealed her character. Think of the courage, the daring, the love, that was needed for it! You are a dangerous rival to me, I fear."

"Well, well," said Joscelyn, with a sigh. "We talk of love and marriage, you and I; but ten to one before the war is over we shall be laid low. Do you remember the look of the battle-field last month at Edge Hill, with its thousands of dead?"

"You expect more fighting," said Arthur Denham, "while I have a conviction that this cannot last long; the peace ardently desired will surely soon come. My Lord Falkland is all for peace, and all the best men on our side. Yet the best on your side, such as Mr. Hampden, seem ever for war. I don't understand the reason of that."

Joscelyn was about to reply, but he checked himself, feeling with Arthur as he did with Dick, that discussion was better avoided, and being well assured that they

were each convinced that they were fighting for the right.

"There is a fine thought in your kinsman's play which he lent me yesternight to read," he observed.

"What, in *The Sophy?*" said Arthur. "There are some fine passages in it, though methinks the father's harsh treatment of the son is unnatural."

"I don't know that," said Joscelyn, bitterly. "Recollect that he was a Mahommedan, a Turk of bygone and more cruel times. There be Christian fathers not over-tender."

"But what was the line you speak of?" said Arthur, regretting his inconsiderate speech.

"'Tis spoke by one of the good courtiers entreating the king to pause before condemning his son—

'Till Time produce her wonted offspring, Truth.'"

"Have you finished the play?" asked Denham. "If not, let us go in now and read together in the long gallery, or better

still—let us persuade the governor to read it to us himself to-night; that will save us from having out the cards. I wish he were less of a gamester. Will and I shall be as poor as church mice if this garrison life goes on much longer, for he detests our playing for low stakes."

"You should turn Puritan," said Joscelyn, with a smile. "In Mr. Hampden's regiment no unlawful games are allowed, and a soldier caught swearing was bound to pay his twelvepence, and for drunkenness they were set in the stocks. As for the officers, they were men who had never been heard to swear at all, save in a court of justice. At first it was hard work to rein in one's tongue, I can tell you. But truly his regiment was worth far more when it came to fighting than those where the discipline was less strict."

"I would there were more of such discipline among us," said Arthur. "But 'tis hard to keep to moderation. Our side tends to lust and licence, and yours, methinks, to narrowness and fanaticism. Maybe from

the conflict betwixt us will spring that temperateness and truth which you and I both desire. In good time here comes the governor. Let us ask him about *The Sophy*."

Sir John Denham was pacing the terrace in front of the Castle. His good-natured eyes scanned the two young men from head to foot as they approached.

"Well, Mr. Heyworth," he exclaimed, in his hearty voice, "I am glad to see you in better case to-day. Methought yesternight you somewhat resembled my hero, the prince who could

'As well endure a prison as a wild bull the net.'"

"We were but now speaking of *The Sophy*, sir, and were about to entreat you to read us the fifth act to-night, if you would be so good."

"The fifth act is not the best," said the poet, candidly. "Yet it opens with a passage on happiness which you might well lay to heart. How say you, gentlemen, if we keep our Christmas here, why should we not act the play in the hall? I dare swear that

Mr. Heyworth, though a Parliamentarian, is no precisian following in the steps of Prynne, the crop-eared attacker of the drama. Let us cast the parts; 'twill pass the time, which, to tell truth, goes devilish slow both to freemen and prisoners."

This plan occupied them harmoniously enough during the following week, and Joscelyn, who had been chosen as the representative of the prince, always connected *The Sophy* with those long days of imprisonment, with their terrible craving for freedom, their sense of helplessness and lost time, their sickening anxiety for news.

CHAPTER III.

The first thing you have to see to in becoming soldiers is that you make yourselves wholly true. Courage is a mere matter of course among any ordinarily well-born youths, but neither truth nor gentleness is matter of course.—RUSKIN.

ONE bright frosty morning the prisoner was pacing dejectedly to and fro on the terrace, watching the sparrows flying happily about the old walls of the Castle, and from time to time looking at the two sundials fixed on the side of the entrance tower. The one near to the window of his bedchamber bore the motto, "*Pretereunt*" ("They pass by"); that above the doorway bore the word, "*Imputantur*" ("They are reckoned to us"). He thought drearily of the slow passage of time, remembering with indescribable wretchedness that this was but

the first day of December, and that his arrest had taken place on the twentieth of the previous month. If ten days seemed so intolerably long, what would months or years of imprisonment be like? And in what way could these tedious hours of imprisonment be imputed—be reckoned to him? How was he serving the country by dragging through a weary time of inaction in Farnham Castle? Was it that only in this particular way his character could be trained, his powers of patience and endurance and self-control developed? Was his friendship with the Denhams needful in some far-distant period of life? Could it possibly bring good to those who should come after? He was musing over these dim possibilities when the sound of approaching horsemen roused him. Looking down from the lofty terrace he could see the whole length of Castle Street, and his heart began to throb wildly when he caught sight of the blue banner of the Parliament heading a goodly column of steel-capped cavalry, whose glittering armour and orange ribbons

made a glowing streak in the wide road between the red-tiled houses. Instantly the garrison of the Castle was all astir. Sir John Denham, who had not expected an attack, and was far more of a poet than a soldier, gave hurried orders as to the defence of the gate-house.

"The rebels have no ordnance," he observed to Arthur; "never fear but we shall be able to withstand them. A hundred men within walls such as these are surely a match for a crew of beggarly Roundheads." Then, catching sight of Joscelyn, who stood close by, "Your pardon, Mr. Heyworth; I had not observed you, and, as you know, I have always maintained that your valour 'deserved a better fortune,' like the captive bashaws. However, since you have irrevocably cast in your lot with the King's enemies, I will ask you now to retire to your room and there to await what comes to pass."

It was hard to turn tamely into the Castle, and impossible to wait patiently. Joscelyn rushed up the winding staircase, and, with

what Arthur Denham would have called his "bull-in-the-net" expression, flung wide the windows of the inner room, letting in the sharp, exhilarating air. The room was in the angle of the tower, and commanded from one side a view of the town, from the other a view of the gate-house. Joscelyn, looking eagerly forth, could see the glittering pikes and helmets of the Parliamentarians, and when the bugle was sounded and the summons made, his excitement became intense. At first he had no idea whose troop it could be, but presently he caught the name which was being passed from one to another of the men-at-arms just below his window: "Waller! Sir William Waller!"

Then indeed his spirits rose. Want of ordnance would not hinder one so resolute and skilful as the conqueror of Portsmouth, and he wondered at Sir John Denham's scornful speech and rash confidence. Meanwhile it had apparently been recognised by the Royalists that the gate-house was weak, for dozens of men were hurrying to and

fro, bringing logs, and planks, and every conceivable obstacle they could lay hands on, till a great pile was made against the gate to strengthen it from within. Scarcely, however, was this completed when Joscelyn, keenly watching the proceedings, was startled by a sudden flash of light, quickly followed by a violent explosion. Sir William Waller had fastened a petard to the Castle gate, and instantly it was broken to pieces, so that had it not been for the great pile of wood which the besieged had just placed against it, the Parliamentarians would at once have entered. As it was they had to remove this barrier, during which a few shots were exchanged, and one of the Parliamentary officers fell, mortally wounded. He had been the first to scale the barrier, and lay face downwards in the dust, the soldiers being far too busy in clearing the road to pay any heed to him, till all was ready for the onward rush of the besiegers; then he was dragged aside, and, apparently being recognised as a person of distinction, some one came to his aid. In the meantime the

governor and the whole of the garrison had retired into the Castle, and before long it was agreed that they should yield upon quarter. The defence had been slight and bad, and Sir John, who would have fought bravely enough, but was lacking in all that was essential to the governor of a fortress, looked greatly depressed and crestfallen. Waller had, it is true, been very nearly killed in a narrow passage by one of his own men, after he had entered the Castle, but he had just escaped, to the intense joy and relief of the Parliamentarians.

Up-stairs in his room in the tower Joscelyn suddenly realised that he was free to come and go as he liked, that he was no longer bound to obey Sir John's directions, but could go down below and see what was passing. With an indescribable sense of relief he threw open his door and hurried down the stairs, making his way with all speed to the banqueting-hall, through the crowd of soldiers that thronged the broad entrance passage.

Beside the hearth, talking to Sir John

Denham, stood a dark-eyed, alert-looking officer, whose brisk yet courteous manner and quietly humorous expression somehow reminded Joscelyn of Sir Robert Neal. Sir William Waller was of course many years younger, being at this time about five-and-forty, but the slight likeness to Clemency's grandfather at once attracted Joscelyn to him, and he felt confident that he should be happy under his new commander.

"Well, Mr. Heyworth," said Sir John, "the tables are turned, you see, and lo! I am your prisoner. Thus 'the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.' This, Sir William, is my sometime prisoner, captured on the highway ten days since, as he was bearing despatches to you."

Sir William's brow clouded, and he greeted Joscelyn with a marked coldness and reserve. Arthur Denham, who was standing close by, looked on in amazement, and clearly Joscelyn felt the rebuff very keenly, for he crimsoned to the roots of his hair. Waller looked at him for a few moments in silence.

"I have heard of you, Mr. Heyworth," he said, "and of the despatches which you were to have delivered to me, despatches received by you from Mr. Pym and known to be of special importance. I understand that in the neighbourhood of your home you allowed yourself to fall into the hands of your father's troop, that family feeling got the better of your sense of duty, and that you surrendered the despatches to our enemies. It rests now with you to clear yourself of a charge of the worst form of treachery."

At the word treachery Joscelyn's eyes flashed with a dangerous light.

"If," he said, in a voice which trembled with suppressed anger, "those of my own party distrust me and deem me a traitor, my assurances will carry little weight. I will ask my honourable foes to tell truthfully what passed on the twentieth of last month."

"Great God!" broke in Arthur, impetuously, "is it treacherous, sir, to fight when others fly, to refuse to yield on quarter, to

struggle single-handed against many, to be struck down and stunned, robbed while but half-conscious of despatches, and dragged through the town a prisoner bound to the stirrup-leathers of the Royalist troop? Do you deem it treachery to resist threats and bribes when urged by all to explain the cipher? Is he to be called a traitor now by you, sir, who, standing a few days since in that very place, was called traitor and recreant, made to endure moral torture, cursed and disowned by his father?"

Waller listened attentively to this outburst; it was impossible to read his face. He turned to Sir John and asked for his version of the story; and the ex-governor, in a quiet fashion, with here and there a touch of wit or a veiled sarcasm, briefly related what had happened.

"And now, gentlemen," he added, "to settle all disputes, let me hand over to Sir William these much-talked-of despatches, which, I presume, he is as unable to read as I am myself till Mr. Heyworth explains the cipher."

Joscelyn would hardly have been human had he not felt a momentary sense of triumph. He thought he detected a latent gleam of amusement in Sir William Waller's astute face as he beckoned him aside and asked him for the key. Having furnished this he withdrew again to the hearth, and stood talking in a low voice to Arthur Denham until Waller once more rejoined them.

"Mr. Heyworth," he said, offering his hand, "I ask your pardon; I have greatly misjudged you, and have been misled by your former comrade, Mr. Original Smith. 'Tis much against my practice to make tale-bearers by listening to mis-reports, and though the man's story seemed coherent enough, I blame myself for too easily giving him credence. There may be a slander in hearing and listening as well as in speaking."

Turning to an officer who stood near he desired him to summon Original Smith, and ere long the ex-tutor appeared, glancing quickly from one to another of the group

near the fire, and with much shrewdness instantly grasping the situation.

"Your tale, Mr. Smith, does not tally with facts," said Sir William, with much sharpness of manner. "You seem to have leapt hastily to the conclusion that Mr. Heyworth intended to betray his trust, and though your former comrade will not breathe a word against you, and has not himself told me of your proceedings, I gather from others that your chief thought was to save yourself, and that you ran off without striking a single blow. Was it not so, Mr. Heyworth?"

The sight of Original Sin Smith's cropped head and priggish face had instantly awakened in Joscelyn the old sense of repulsion, but conscious of his own prejudice, he tried to be just.

"The word had been given, sir," he replied, "to escape to the Holt Forest, for we were greatly outnumbered, and it seemed the sole chance of saving the despatches. When my horse fell beneath me, the other men instinctively made a stand against the

enemy, but Mr. Smith was doubtless within his rights in escaping to the forest, and in a moment of panic many would have done as he did. I confess it seems to me that he had no call to cast so vile an imputation on my honour."

"I have greatly erred," said Original Sin, "and I humbly crave your forgiveness, Mr. Heyworth. Believe me, 'twas naught but a mistake."

"Well, well, let bygones be bygones, gentlemen," said Sir William. "The important point is that through Mr. Heyworth's faithfulness we have been able to secure this important castle with extraordinarily small loss of life. Had he consented to decipher this missive when pressed to do so, Sir John Denham would have known that the Close Committee counselled a speedy assault, and would doubtless have made great preparation to receive us."

"Sir," said Joscelyn, "there is one thing I would beg of you, and that is that Sir John, Mr. Denham, and the other prisoners be treated with as much courtesy and

kindness as I by them have been treated."

"'Tis well spoken," said Sir William, "and in truth 'tis my constant endeavour to express all the civilities I can to those of the adverse party. For are there not good men on both sides? and those so divided that, like parallel lines (the both right and straight), they cannot be brought to meet?"

The simile lingered ever after in the minds of Joscelyn Heyworth and Arthur Denham. They parted regretfully enough, having formed one of those rare and stimulating friendships which can sometimes exist between those most opposed to each other. We may go through life in two ways, either as lovers of uniformity, jealously shrinking from all that offends our taste and shocks our views of truth; or as lovers of unity holding fast through evil report and good report to that love of humanity, that great reality of brotherhood, which will outlast all differences in religion and in politics.

CHAPTER IV.

Ah, Life, that dost begin so fair
  With eager heart and tender kiss,
And strokings of Love's golden hair,
  That thou shouldst come to this—

This—that a broken man should watch
  And pray for just one day—one more—
While Death is trifling with the latch,
  And fumbling at the door.

NORMAN R. GALE.

THE prisoners were sent early the next day to London, and Joscelyn entered upon his new duties; he was promoted to a captaincy in Sir William Waller's regiment, the relations between them being specially cordial on account of their mutual friendship with Hampden, and also perhaps on account of the brief misunderstanding, which Waller greatly regretted. As for Original

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Sin, he played the *rôle* of penitent most creditably, and Joscelyn with ready generosity quickly forgave, stifling the doubts which now and then rose in his mind with the remembrance that his comrade had been known and apparently trusted all his life by a man as shrewd and wary as Sir Robert Neal.

There was much to be done in forming the garrison, and Original, who showed no very keen desire for active fighting, proved very useful as clerk to the newly-appointed governor of the Castle, George Wither, the poet, who, strangely enough, succeeded his rival, Sir John Denham.

One evening, just as the officers had met together in the hall for supper, the whole castle was roused by the most unearthly sound of howling and piteous wailing.

"Some banshee must surely haunt the place," said Joscelyn.

"The ghost of poor Colonel Fane," suggested a young lieutenant, and all present thought of the unburied corpse of the son of the Earl of Westmorland lying at that

moment in the Castle, the one victim of the siege, who had just succumbed to the wound in the cheek which Joscelyn had seen him receive during the capture of the gate-house.

"Vain, popish superstitions," muttered Original Sin. "Scripture saith that the dead sleep in their graves till the last trump."

"On the contrary," said Sir William, "I think you will find that Scripture saith the spirits of just men made perfect are with God the Judge of all, and that they compass us about, forming a great cloud of witnesses."

"Scripture also saith, 'Thou fool, thou sowest not that body that shall be,'" observed Joscelyn in a low voice, for Original Sin's ghastly view of the actual living self sleeping in the mould was in the last degree repulsive to him.

"My worthy friends," said Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, bluntly, "'tis no banshee but a dog that makes this pitiful howling. A hound baying the moon belike."

Sir William smiled a little at the abrupt turn given to the talk, and bade one of the men go without and inquire into the matter. Meanwhile, Original Sin returned to his argument about the resurrection, and the talk waxed eager again till it was suddenly checked by an exclamation from Joscelyn.

"'Tis Cymro!" he cried, and started back from the table with a look of amazement and distress; "it is our dog at Shortell Manor. Something must be wrong, or surely he would never have found his way here."

The tawny colley called forth many a word of praise from the officers, and it was touching to see his rapture of delight at finding his master; this, however, soon gave place to low whines of distress. He darted back towards the doorway, then returned to Joscelyn, laid his fore-paws on his knee, licked his face, whined, and gazed at him with eyes full of real tears, as if well-nigh broken-hearted that his master could not understand his language.

"I am certain there is something the matter at home," said Joscelyn, in great agitation. "I never saw Cymro in such distress."

"Were anything amiss they would have sent some messenger," said Sir William. "Was no one at the gate with the dog?"

"No one, sir," said the man who had gone forth before. "They say the dog has been there this half-hour, whining and scratching and at length howling for admittance."

"'Tis little likely that any messenger would be sent," said Joscelyn; "they no longer own me."

"To-morrow you can send your servant over to inquire," said Sir William. "And now, gentlemen, I will bid you good-night. I shall be glad of your services, Captain Heyworth, in my study."

"'Tis strange," he observed, as Joscelyn set down the lamp he had carried from the hall on the crowded table of the General's private room, "the dog certainly seems

much disturbed. Do you know of any member of your family being ill?"

"No, sir," said Joscelyn; "yet I am much afraid it is for my little sister that the dog seeks help," and he related to Sir William the story of Rosamond's visit to Farnham on the morning of the 24th.

The General listened in silence.

"Poor child!" he said, when Joscelyn paused, "she is one of those to whom this war must bring bitter suffering. Why should you not ride over yourself early on the morrow and make inquiries of this gate-keeper who is still attached to you?"

Joscelyn thanked him for the permission, and an hour later, when his work was over, went slowly up to his room in the tower, oppressed with miserable forebodings, and only wishing that the night was over. Cymro, with an air of piteous depression, stretched himself at the foot of the bed, and before long Joscelyn, weary with a hard day's labour, had fallen asleep. He slept, however, but a few minutes and woke with a horrible start, springing to his feet at the

sound of an imaginary bugle, and at a summons, whether real or imaginary he could not tell, which had spoken clearly to him the words, "You are wanted at home."

With trembling hands he felt for the tinder-box and struck a light, almost expecting to see a messenger beside his bed. But there was no one; only Cymro started up and began to utter short barks as if delighted to see him roused.

"Hush! down! quiet!" he said, remembering that it was night, and that most of the garrison slept.

"Would to God it were morning!" he exclaimed to himself, as he extinguished the light and once more lay down.

"Be quiet, Cymro!" as again the dog began to howl in the most heartrending voice. "Come here, good dog; don't rouse the whole castle!"

He patted the soft, silky head and fondled the long ears, gradually soothing the colley into quiet, and talking to him almost as if he were a child. But his words grew

gradually dreamy and confused, and before long he was fast asleep.

Both dog and master indeed slept, and apparently they both had a dream, for Cymro's sleep seemed as much agitated and disturbed as the sleep of the young officer.

Joscelyn dreamed that he was standing in Rosamond's room at the Manor; about the bed he saw his mother and Isabella, the chaplain in his surplice, and the cross-looking old nurse who had ruled them all in childhood with a rod of iron. Something seemed to be holding him back, but with a desperate struggle he freed himself so that he could put the watchers aside and see Rosamond. She was moaning and wailing and begging him to come to her; he saw by the look on her face that she was dying, and he held out his arms to her and struggled to reach her, but could not. Then the whole scene seemed to vanish and he was without in a dark place, but the piteous cry of "Joscelyn! Joscelyn! O God, send Joscelyn!" still rang in his ears. Yet

more and more the darkness seemed to baffle and check him, to rise up like an impassable barrier shutting him out from the dying child. And as he struggled in agony it seemed to him that in the darkness strong arms clasped him and a voice said to him clearly, "Rise and go home! Rise and go home!"

He once more sprang from the bed, and the action woke him. Cymro bounded up and began to lick his feet, to thud the floor with his tail, to utter low sounds of intense relief and pleasure. And now Joscelyn hesitated no longer; he was convinced that not a moment must be lost. Hastily lighting a candle, throwing on his clothes, and drawing on his long riding-boots, he went to one of the adjoining rooms in which Sir William Waller slept. He was relieved to find that the General was awake; a lamp still burned by the side of the bed, and Sir William, who was somewhat fond of turning night into day, lay comfortably reading a small volume of Plato. He listened with interest to Joscelyn's story.

"You can go at once," he said. "I only stipulate for two things—that you go fully armed and attended by your servant, and that you return on the morrow."

Joscelyn waited but to thank him, and then hurried off to get his helmet and corselet and to summon Morrison. He was chafing a little at the thought of the delay which would be caused by rousing his man, when, to his relief and astonishment, as he mounted the winding stair he encountered Morrison himself fully dressed.

"What," he cried, "you are up already! How is that?"

"The Lord only knows, sir," said Morrison, rubbing his eyes like a man still half asleep. "I woke up with the feeling strong upon me that I must dress and come, and gladly enough will I turn back to bed if it is a fool's errand I've come on, for 'tis a cruel cold night."

"I was just coming to call you. I have the General's permission to ride over at once to Shortell Manor. Saddle your horse as

fast as you can, and I will see to my own to save time."

Giving the password to the guard, they were let out of the Castle, and after some little delay in the stables rode out through the gate-house, which was now in process of restoration. Joscelyn was astonished to learn from the warder that it was but little after midnight, and realised that his sleep must have been of the briefest, though his dream in its misery had seemed long. The night was clear and frosty, so that they were able to push on rapidly owing to the hardness of the road, and yet how terribly long the ride seemed to him! how interminable the forest! how eagerly he strained his eyes for the first glimpse of the church tower! At length they reached it, and glancing towards the white gravestones and the lime tree avenue leading to the porch, he remembered the Sunday evening when he had listened to the psalm which told of the clouds and darkness that for a time veiled the ever-dwelling Right and Justice of God. The darkness seemed to surge round him

when he thought of Rosamond in some strange need, some great danger, though his vigorous nature was not one to be baffled by perplexed questionings; in his pain he held fast to the One he was honestly trying to serve. Yet his heart nevertheless gave a great bound of alarm when he saw that a light was burning in Barnaby's lodge, and that as they rode up the door was flung wide open and the old man came hurrying out to the gate.

"What is amiss with her?" asked Joscelyn, hoarsely.

"Good Lord, sir," said Barnaby, in astonishment, "is it you? I had thought 'twas the surgeon from Alton."

"Speak!" said Joscelyn, laying his hand imploringly on the old man's shoulder, and hardly able to endure his slow words. "How is she? What ails her?"

"Whether cold or fretting I can't justly say, but she be sick of a fever," said Barnaby. "Coming back from Farnham that market-day, as ill-luck would have it, we were spied by my lady, and though I would

have told fifty lies to save the poor little maid, Miss Rosamond would have none of it, but owned up as brave as could be when questioned. I know they kept the poor little maid on bread and water for the next three days, and that old Kezia was ordered to give her a sound whipping into the bargain, and belike she took a chill in Farnham Park waiting for you."

With a stifled exclamation of wrath and grief, Joscelyn drew up his reins and urged his horse on at a gallop. Barnaby's words had almost maddened him; the thought of the little delicate girl beaten for him, starved for him, dying now through her loving effort to save him, wrung his heart with an intolerable torture.

Dismounting at the door of the Manor, he flung his bridle without a word to Morrison and strode up the steps. Here, too, as at the lodge, he was mistaken for the surgeon; the two serving-men hurried forward to usher him in, and at the farther end of the hall, leaning on his stick, stood Sir Thomas himself, with a face full of sad-

ness and anxiety, with eyes soft and wistful, hardly like the same man who had cursed his son at Farnham Castle.

Joscelyn had no room for thought of the past or himself.

"Father," he cried, "how is she? Am I in time to see her?"

Removing his steel cap he crossed the hall, but Sir Thomas started back as though he had seen a ghost; then, suddenly realising the audacity of his son's return, the demon of pride drove back all thoughts of Rosamond, all tender feelings. The angry colour mounted to his brow.

"You cursed rebel!" he cried, "how dare you set foot in my house? I have disowned you. Get you hence!"

"Rosamond has not disowned me, and I am hers, and I will see her," said Joscelyn, defiantly. "No one on earth shall hinder me."

He strode towards the staircase.

"Seize him!" cried Sir Thomas, beckoning to the servants. "Thrust him out! You dogs, do you hesitate? Seize him this

instant! Were I not helpless with gout I myself would do it."

The two serving-men, afraid to show any more reluctance, came hastily forward, but Joscelyn suddenly dashed down the three steps he had ascended, and before Sir Thomas could so much as frame a sentence both lacqueys had measured their length on the floor, and the victor was striding up the oak staircase, filled with a fiery strength which seemed capable of subduing everything. As he approached the room which he had once shared with Dick, Cymro, who had disappeared on their arrival, bounded out to greet him. He perceived that the door which led through this room to Rosamond's bed-chamber was standing ajar; he could see lights and hear voices.

"Joscelyn! Joscelyn!" cried the voice he had heard in his dream. "O God! send Joscelyn!"

"My child," said the chaplain, "your time is short. It were fitting that you thought of your sins, and asked God to

have mercy on your soul. Then I can give you the Blessed Sacrament."

"I will not take it without Joscelyn. I do not care about my soul," moaned Rosamond.

"Child! child!" said her mother, weeping bitterly, "you know not what you say. Your brother cannot come here. An outcast, a rebel—how is it possible? he is lost to us and to——"

She was checked by feeling a touch on her arm, and looking round she saw Joscelyn beside her. The amazement, the shrinking horror in her face wounded him sorely. Isabella, too, started back at his approach as though he had been a leper. He passed on, just conscious of the stern glance of the chaplain from the other side of the bed, yet with all personal resentment fading fast before the one absorbing thought of the dying child's wish. Her eyes were closed; he took the little thin fingers, which were clutching nervously at the coverlet, in his strong grasp.

"God has sent me, Rosamond," he said,

his voice faltering a little as it fell on the deathly stillness of the room.

The child opened her eyes, a lovely smile lighting up her face.

"You are free?" she cried.

"Yes, free; and in time to save you," he said, folding her in his arms, and kissing her tenderly.

For a while she lay in silent content; then, just glancing towards the chaplain, she said softly—

"I am sorry I did not trust God. Let me have the Blessed Sacrament now."

Sir Thomas, limping at that moment into the room, heard the words; he looked strangely towards the disarmed man holding the dying child so lovingly, and remembered how, but a few minutes before, with fiery strength Joscelyn had dashed aside those who would have checked his entrance. He listened with a dream-like feeling to what was passing.

"I can scarcely administer the Holy Communion while your brother is present," said the chaplain, doubtfully. "You have seen

him, my dear; now let him go, for it is not seemly that he should be here when none of his family are in charity with him."

"No, no," cried Rosamond. "I love him: I will not let him go."

"Do not grieve the poor child, sir," said Joscelyn. "As for the rest of my family, they have disowned me. I am naught to them; therefore my presence cannot disturb them. Perchance there is no call for any special charity towards strangers and foes, and at any rate they hate me no worse than they hate others of my way of thinking."

The extreme bitterness of his tone showed how far he was from accepting in truth the position of stranger and alien. The chaplain looked troubled, but it was no time for argument, and all lesser questions were overshadowed by his desire to administer to Rosamond her first and last communion. Preparations had already been made for the service, and now he dared hesitate no longer, but, hurrying through the short epistle and gospel, read, with a trembling voice, the

exhortation to all those who were in love and charity with their neighbours to take this Holy Sacrament to their comfort, while feeling in his heart how very hard it was to ignore the figure kneeling beside the pillow and supporting the sick child, even though he had represented himself to be of no account whatever. Rosamond seemed to gather strength as the service proceeded, joining very earnestly in the prayers, and following every detail with close attention. The chaplain began positively to tremble as he approached the trying moment. He administered the bread to Sir Thomas, to Lady Heyworth, to Isabella, to old Kezia, who knelt almost at Joscelyn's elbow. Then he turned, and ignoring the outcast with an effort, passed round to the other side of the bed, and, with a voice that shook with suppressed emotion, repeated the words to Rosamond. She received the bread in her little worn hand, deliberately broke it in two, and herself held one of the pieces to Joscelyn. He took it, and a sort of stir—a movement of horror—was heard in the

room, but he was past being hurt by that; all bitterness seemed to have died out of his heart when the child's hand, with the gift within it, had been raised to his lips. As for the chaplain, his eyes grew dim with tears, and the next time, much to the surprise of all, he did not pass over the disowned son, but himself held the chalice to his lips, an act for which he was afterwards much blamed, but which he never regretted. When the blessing had been spoken, they one by one drew near and kissed the child, but none dared to suggest that anybody save Joscelyn should hold her, and when she spoke they held their breath to listen, for Rosamond, who had been of so little account to them during life, had now all at once become precious.

"Oh, Joscelyn!" she sighed, "I am so dreadfully tired."

"That is what you said to me in the park, do you remember?" he answered; "and when you had eaten you were better. What could you eat now?"

"I could drink a bowl of milk," said Rosamond.

"No, my dear, no," began old Kezia, shaking her head. "A fever must be starved, so I've always been told."

"Fetch some milk!" said Joscelyn, as if he had been commanding a troop. And the old nurse went meekly off to fulfil the order, marvelling at the change that had come over her former charge.

Against all known rules, Rosamond had the milk, and soon after her eyelids gently closed, and she lay breathing so softly that they scarcely knew whether she did still breathe. Half-an-hour later, when the surgeon from Alton arrived, they almost thought he had come too late. He was an old man, who had had much experience, and was blessed with more than the usual share of common-sense. He bent low over the child, his wrinkled fingers on her tiny white wrist, his keen but kindly eyes scanning her intently.

"Lay her down gently," he said to Joscelyn. Then, seeing that his meaning had

been misunderstood, he added, "Nay! she is not dead, but in a sound sleep—a sleep that will probably save her."

The sudden reaction was overpowering, and as Joscelyn obeyed the surgeon's orders and turned away from the bed, a violent trembling fit seized him; with unsteady steps he passed through the midst of the watchers, and, reaching his old room, let himself drop on to the window-seat, more utterly spent than he had been on the night of Edge Hill. He did not know whether minutes or hours passed before the surgeon walked through the room in conversation with the chaplain.

"Well," he heard the old man say, "I will rest in your chamber as you suggest, sir, and see her again in the morning. I have great hopes of her—great hopes."

Their voices died away in the distance. Then his mother and Isabella came in, followed slowly by Sir Thomas, who closed Rosamond's door with elaborate carefulness behind him. Controlling himself with an

effort, Joscelyn rose and went towards Lady Heyworth.

"Mother," he said, pleadingly, "will you not, at least, bid me farewell?"

But she shrank back, hiding her face in her handkerchief, and weeping bitterly.

"How can I bid you to fare well in your rebellion?" she sobbed. "I cannot be disloyal to my Church and my King."

Sir Thomas, watching intently, saw the grieved look of disappointed hope in Joscelyn's face, and felt a curious stirring of the heart as, spite of the rebuff, the son bent low and kissed his mother's hand.

"I hear you are to be married," said Joscelyn, approaching Isabella and offering to salute her. "I wish you happiness."

Isabella drew back with a gesture of contempt. "I would as lief kiss Judas!" she protested.

He flushed painfully and, turning away, fastened on his corselet and sword, and went towards the door. As he opened it, however, Cymro, seeing him on the point of departure, sprang up, and with low moans

of distress began to fawn upon him. He bent down, giving the faithful hound a great hug, and letting him lick his face.

"Guard her, Cymro!" he said; "guard her!" and the dog, as if he understood all, went obediently and stretched himself on the mat by Rosamond's door. Then, with never a glance towards his father, Joscelyn went out.

The pride in the old baronet's heart had, however, been almost conquered. He thought of the little suffering child, and of the sacrament she had forced them to share. He grieved over the rebuffs Joscelyn had received from the others, and his strong sense of justice was revolted by Isabella's bitter allusion to Judas. Was it to be wondered at that Joscelyn had not ventured even to offer him a farewell word? Yet his silence cut him to the heart. He limped painfully out into the corridor and called to him to come back.

"You bade the others farewell," he said. "Why had you no word for me?"

Never, perhaps, had a more unreasonable

reproach been uttered, a more inconsistent sentence framed by one who had disowned and cursed his son. But Joscelyn blessed the inconsistency, recognising the irritable, yet most deeply-loving heart of the father he had loved all his life. He had bent low to salute his mother, but it was literally on his knees that he kissed his father's outstretched hand.

"Farewell, father," he said, falteringly.

"God be with you—my son!" said Sir Thomas.

And not another word passed between them, only as the old man felt hot tears falling on his right hand he placed the other hand on his son's bent head. And Joscelyn understood that the curse was revoked.

CHAPTER V.

Hark! I hear the tramp of thousands,
And of armèd men the hum;
Lo! a nation's hosts have gathered
Round the quick alarming drum,—
Saying, "Come,
Freemen, come!
Ere your heritage be wasted," said the quick alarming drum.—BRET HARTE.

NOT a little comforted by the doctor's cheering words about Rosamond and by his father's wholly unexpected kindness, Joscelyn rode back to Farnham Castle in the grey winter's dawn. As he reached the little town the sun was just rising, and recollecting in what a misery of suspense he had last traversed West Street, he forgot his present weariness, forgot that he was cold and hungry, and worn with sorrow and want of sleep, his eager, hopeful nature

basking in the happy sense of relief just as his stiff limbs basked in the sunshine. At the Castle he found small prospect of rest. Fresh troops from London had just arrived, and he learned that Sir William Waller intended to set out that very night for Winchester.

"I have had but two night marches as yet," said Joscelyn to his neighbour at the dining-table when the plan fell under discussion, "and one of those was the most wretched night you can conceive, struggling through the Warwickshire lanes in mud that well-nigh made it impossible to drag on the guns."

"Ah, you were in the memorable march to Edge Hill!" said Sir William, overhearing the remark. "I had forgot you had been there. Few but Colonel Hampden could have pushed on in the teeth of such difficulties, and had it not been for his arrival just at the supreme moment, Edge Hill might have been a defeat for us. You will have many a night march with me this winter, never fear; but God grant this frost

away by it on a certain Lord's Day?" said Sir Arthur Hazlerigg in an undertone.

He was a man who took keen pleasure in quarrels, but Joscelyn was too courteous to act on his suggestion, and, availing himself of some interruption, he left the table and went out on to the terrace. As he paced to and fro, his attention was drawn to a group of soldiers who were crowding round some one playing on a rebeck; the familiar air, "Sumer is icumen in," made him think of his first evening at the Court House, when Clemency had looked tearfully forth from the window, as the children followed the loaded wain singing the hay-harvest song to that very tune.

He drew nearer to the musician, when what was his surprise to recognise a well-known retainer who lived upon his uncle's estate at Bletchingley, and who had occasionally tramped over to Shortell at Christmas-time, bearing presents from one household to the other, and officiating as leader of the music at a Christmas dance at the Manor. Temperance Turner pre-

sented a comical appearance that morning, his rusty old cloak serving to veil but not to hide the hump on his back, his huge head made still more noticeable by a steeple-crowned hat, and his humorous mouth turned down at the corners into what he deemed a puritanical shape. He had begun by playing the "Old Hundredth" and singing it right lustily in his powerful bass. But he quickly found that the Parliamentary troops liked merry tunes as well as other folk, and he had now relapsed into what Original Sin would certainly have termed an ungodly and profane ballad. When he had ended it Joscelyn tossed him a groat.

"Why, Temperance!" he exclaimed, "who would have thought to see you here! Have you joined the good cause?"

"Ay, ay, master," said the hunchback, with a twinkle in his dark eyes, "all for King and Parliament be I, and many's the soldier that trusts me with a message to his home, or sends by me a fairing to his lass."

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"Who knows whether he be not a spy?" said one of the men.

"Nay," said Joscelyn, "'tis a worthy fellow I have known all my life. I would vouch for his honour as for my own, and will warrant he'll do a good turn for any one of you from sheer good-nature. Come, Temperance, have you brought me no letter?"

The men's suspicions were disarmed by the open way in which Temperance Turner produced two letters from his wallet, and by the eager, boyish fashion in which the young captain snatched at them, and breaking the seal of the first began to read it as he slowly paced back to the terrace.

"A love-letter!" said Temperance, winking. "Now, who can tell me whether any one of the name of Original Sin Smith be at the Castle?"

"You've not brought a love-letter for him, ay?" said one of the men, with a laugh.

"I vow 'tis from a woman," said

Temperance, his eyes twinkling as he took a third letter from his wallet.

"There he be," said one of the soldiers, "yonder long-faced man coming down the steps."

Temperance shuffled forward with a respectful bow.

"No vagabond minstrels should be admitted into this godly garrison," said Original Sin, severely. "How did you gain admittance?"

"So please you, master, I be no vagabond, I be a godly psalm-singer, also a news-bearer and letter-carrier among those well affected to the Parliament."

"I heard you playing a profane ballad but now," said Original; "'tis not seemly, not seemly."

"Nay, sir, 'twas a spiritual song," protested Temperance, with the most sober face possible; and forthwith he took up his rebeck and bow and began dolefully to scrape out at a funereal pace the gay tune of "Sumer is icumen in," which was so strangely metamorphosed that a more

musical person than Original Sin might have been deceived. The hunchback then paused and produced the letter once more.

"I come but lately from Katterham, at the other side of this county, and a yeoman's wife there gave me a letter to bear to one named Original Sin Smith," he observed.

"Right, 'tis for me," said Original, eagerly, the affected formality fading from his face and manner as he took the letter. All that was good in him seemed to be touched into life by the thought of his old mother at the farm far away. "Wait but to carry back a reply," he said to Temperance, "and I will give you a shilling for your pains, man."

Temperance raised his hat and scraped his foot, then, turning towards the terrace, he again approached Joscelyn, who still paced to and fro engrossed in his letters.

Glancing round as he heard a step behind him, he suddenly confronted the eager and strangely pathetic face of the hunchback.

The dark eyes which could twinkle with such humour and fun were full now of a dumb devotion which made him think of the eyes of Cymro. Coming straight back from thoughts of Clemency and dreams of love, Joscelyn felt a pity and a tenderness towards this poor fellow which he could not have explained, but which made his manner more than usually kind and winning.

"You have been a good friend to me, Temperance," he said, "these letters are worth their weight in gold. Now, can I serve you in any way?"

"Ay, master," said the hunchback, "you can trust me to be your messenger. These many years have I hoped for the chance of showing you my gratitude. For I've not forgot, master, I've not forgot."

"Gratitude!" said Joscelyn, looking perplexed. "For what?"

"Do you not mind, master, how, four years ago, you saved my lass from dishonour? How you warned me what Master Jervis was after? Belike you forget,

since 'tis countless the ones that he has ruined, but my lass was saved, master, and 'twas your doing. I'll never forget it to you, and if you'll let me be your messenger, why, a right trusty one will I be."

Joscelyn was much moved by the hunchback's sincere devotion. His thoughts went back to a visit which he and Jervis had paid at Bletchingley during his first long vacation ; and many forgotten details flashed back into his mind. In truth, although he never realised this, it was in a great degree his disgust at the shameless profligacy and selfishness shown by Jervis during that summer holiday which helped to mould his own character. Even in those old days, when neither of them had thought of actual division, Jervis had not scrupled to taunt him with the name of "Puritan," and undoubtedly he had learnt much, in Spartan fashion, from the utter lack of self-control which his elder brother had exhibited. A weaker nature would almost inevitably have been contaminated, but Joscelyn, with his strong will, his pure heart, his active,

healthy mind, had come safely through the ordeal. Now, by a strange coincidence, that long-forgotten bit of knight-errantry, which at the time had evoked from Jervis all the taunts and abuse most galling to the young undergraduate, brought him his first letter from his future wife, and a hope of further communication through the hunchback by no means to be despised.

"I will get you a pass from Sir William Waller," he said; "then you will be able to come and go without so much risk. Tell me how you got these letters."

"Master Dick came to my cottage early one morning," said Temperance, "and asked me to guide him to Katterham Court House, and to make some excuse for entering the grounds. We set off together, and he gave me your letter which I delivered at the house, and later on he had speech with Mistress Coriton, as belike he tells you himself. Next day he and Master Jervis rode away to join Sir Ralph Hopton's army, and I started on the tramp to Guildford, and so here."

"See," said Joscelyn, taking a twenty-shilling piece from his purse, "here is wherewithal to keep you for a while. And if you would serve me, do this. Go at once to the house of Barnaby, the gatekeeper at Shortell, and meet us to-night on the road to Winchester, bringing me news of my sister's welfare. Then stay in those parts a few days and bring me fresh tidings, after which I will send you back with a letter to Katterham."

Temperance, greatly delighted at the trust reposed in him, promised to do as he was told, and Joscelyn went off to his General, ready to work all the more cheerfully because his heart was ringing with Clemency's loving words and Dick's congratulations. It was not till just before supper that he found a moment's leisure in which to write a few hurried lines to Rosamond.

"Keep up your heart, fair Rosamond," he wrote, "and do your best to recover. Your loving thought for my safety has not been wasted, but has borne good fruit.

Yet that the fruit become not bitter to the taste, have a care of yourself I beg, and let me know ere long that your pains are ended and your health restored. If you lack aught or find yourself in any strait, send Cymro, and trust me I will come to you, be the way never so difficult. Sir William Waller has kindly writ a letter of protection which I have sent to Barnaby, it will save Shortell from being harassed by the Parliamentarians, and had best be kept by him at the lodge in case you should be molested. We march for Winchester this night. I hear by Temperance Turner that Dick has joined Sir Ralph Hopton's army, and am in some fear that he and I may find ourselves face to face in open fight. Give us your prayers. I cannot forget the grief of one of our soldiers at Edge Hill who died on the field, his wound having—so he told me—been given to him by his brother, who was in the King's army, and from whom he had before received naught but kindness. God grant that such a sorrow may not come to

Dick or to your loving brother, JOSCELYN HEYWORTH."

The hunchback was true to his word. As they drew near the appointed meeting-place that evening, Joscelyn heard above the tramp of Waller's forces on the frosty road the welcome sound of the rebeck, and the hundredth psalm played as only Temperance could play it. The soldiers caught up the well-known tune, and in the dark night their voices rang out clearly—

> "All people that on earth do dwell,
> Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
> Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell,
> Come ye before Him and rejoice."

At that moment the hunchback perceived his master, but the soldiers no longer wanted the rebeck to lead them, and sang on as they toiled up the hill, while Joscelyn talked eagerly to the quaint little messenger holding to his stirrup-leather.

"Does she do well?" he asked, hopefully.

"Ay, master, right well," said Temperance. "She wakes only to take food, and

then sleeps again like a new-born babe. The doctor says the fever has left her."

"God be thanked," said Joscelyn. "Bear her this letter, Temperance; give it to Barnaby, he will know how best to deliver it. And see you come to me this day se'nnight at Winchester. Farewell."

Temperance took the letter, and then drawing his bow across the strings led off boldly in the last verse of the psalm, in which Joscelyn joined with the other men as they rode up the long ascent.

> "For why, the Lord our God is good,
> His mercy is for ever sure,
> His truth at all times firmly stood,
> And shall from age to age endure."

After the psalm was ended Joscelyn rode for some time in silence, listening to the sound of the rebeck, growing more and more faint. At last it died utterly away, and nothing was to be heard save the rumbling of the gun-carriages, the slow tramp of the foot regiments, and the sharp ring of the horse-hoofs on the frosty road. Presently, as they passed a stunted oak tree, half

smothered with ivy, a white owl flew hooting by them, making a momentary gleam of brightness in the dim starlight.

"I could envy him his powers of seeing," said Waller; "yet though we cannot see as cats and bats and owls do, yet we can see as saints and angels see. Often has that thought come to me on a dark night."

"Yet," said Joscelyn, attracted by the quiet sincerity of the elder man, "in these distracted times, 'tis hard to see in that fashion. We fight as conscience bids us, yet we see not what the result will be; we see but a step before us."

"True," said Waller; "yet make but each step with the will to serve God and your neighbour, and be sure that in some way it will help in making the kingdom of heaven come. And those of our foes who are true men, and have a zeal for righteous dealing, why, be sure they too advance the good cause, even while appearing to thwart it. I know that the differences in your own family are distressing to you."

"If there had been but one of the rest

with me," said Joscelyn, "I could better bear it. If Dick were but with me!"

"Well, well!" said Sir William. "Perchance this cloud of separation may, like the dark night, remind you more of that spiritual eyesight we spoke on. Be it never so dark outwardly, we can, without the help of a candle, look in the sense of our wants up to God, and find a clear and lightsome passage through Christ to the throne of grace. In His light alone do we see light."

"My brothers have joined Sir Ralph Hopton's army," said Joscelyn, "and may, likely enough, be at Winchester."

"They could not serve under a better man," said Sir William, warmly; "a noble, upright, God-fearing man. I know him well, and have ever held him in high esteem. We were comrades in Germany. As for the siege, I am not without hopes that it may be but brief, and that when summoned the city will yield upon honourable conditions. The castle, oddly enough, chances to be my own inheritance, and loth should I be that the fine old building, and

King Arthur's Round Table that hangs there, should suffer damage."

By the time the morning had dawned, and the weary men halted to refresh themselves at Alresford, Joscelyn had learnt to know and love his new commander. Waller, though without the fascination and the extraordinary power of Hampden, was a man of most sterling qualities. He had served as a volunteer in Germany, fighting in the army of the Protestant princes against the Emperor; and later on, as the member for Andover, he had done good service in Parliament. His moderation, though little to the taste of the extreme men like Original Smith, made him thoroughly congenial to Joscelyn, and while deeply imbued with the best spirit of Puritanism, he was much more free from prejudice than many of the leaders, acting on some questions with the Presbyterians, on others with the party already beginning to be known as Independents. He had gained much from his experience in Germany, and his broad-minded, genial nature,

his tact and courtesy, together with a habit which he had of making friends of those who served under him, stood him now in good stead. Joscelyn found him invariably kind and considerate, though when necessity arose he could find fault with considerable sharpness.

CHAPTER VI.

"What if, 'mid the cannon's thunder,
Whistling shot and bursting bomb,
When my brothers fall around me,
Should my heart grow cold and numb?"
But the drum
Answered, "Come—
Better there in death united, than in life a recreant,
—Come!"—BRET HARTE.

THE attack upon Winchester began at noon on Tuesday, the 12th of December, and, much to Joscelyn's relief, the city yielded after a siege of little more than two hours. The castle, however, resisted till the following day, when the Royalists sent out to treat with Waller, and Joscelyn and another officer were sent as hostages to them during the parley. He wondered whether by any chance Dick might be in the castle, and, as he entered the beautiful old hall, looked

searchingly round the group of officers, meeting on all sides glances of contemptuous scorn from the Cavaliers, who clearly regarded the hostages as base rebels to whom no sort of courtesy was due.

Suddenly a mocking voice fell on his ear.

"I thought as much," exclaimed a young officer, lounging forward from one of the stone window-seats. "Yonder, gentlemen, is my Roundhead brother, crowing over the conquered leaders of the ungodly."

Glancing round, Joscelyn found himself face to face with Jervis, whose spirits did not appear to be much affected by the loss of the city.

"Where is Dick? Hath any harm befallen him? Is he wounded?" asked Joscelyn, anxiously.

"You had better have been solicitous about his safety before joining in the siege," said Jervis, scornfully. "Here! I have a paper that may perchance please you."

With a malicious laugh he handed him a printed pamphlet, entitled, "A Puritan set

forth in his lively colours; with Poems on the Roundhead's Character."

Joscelyn read a few lines of the poem—

> "He that would holy seem in all men's sight
> When as he truly is an hypocrite,
> Would be thought humble and not have decride
> His obstinacy and spiritual pride;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> That would be counted blameless from his youth,
> This is a very Roundhead in good truth."

Having glanced at the outrageous libel on Puritan women which followed, he tore the paper to bits, and was about to make a stinging retort, when Dick pushed his way through the throng and eagerly grasped his hand.

"I have been hoping to see you," he exclaimed. "They told us Sir William Waller had taken Farnham Castle, and I knew you must be free."

The two brothers withdrew to a window-seat at the other side of the hall—the noisy group of Cavaliers to their right, and the Round Table on the wall to their left, blazoned with the names of Arthur's knights. In a hurried fashion Dick heard all that

had passed at Farnham, of Rosamond's brave adventure, and of that strange night at the Manor; while yet more hurriedly Joscelyn heard of Dick's visit to Clemency and of his prospects under Sir Ralph Hopton. Then—all too soon—the time came for the Royalist officers to leave the place, and the friendly foes sorrowfully parted, the victor looking even more downcast than the vanquished.

On the Thursday morning Joscelyn was awaiting his General's orders, when a trooper rode up in hot haste, demanding to see Sir William Waller on an urgent matter. Joscelyn took him into the room where Sir William was transacting business. The message was from Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, to the effect that when Sir Arthur Hazlerigg and his troops had entered the cathedral, which, for want of space elsewhere, had been assigned to them as barracks, the mob had entered with them and threatened to wreck the whole place, the soldiers becoming utterly demoralised, and the intended search for treasure becoming the wildest orgie.

Waller instantly hurried forth, and, mounting his horse, rode as fast as possible to the cathedral, attended by Joscelyn and two or three of his officers. Entering by the central door at the west end they found the whole church in confusion. The soldiers, partly actuated by blind zeal, but to a great extent governed only by the spirit of wanton destruction which almost always seeks some outlet in the excitement of taking a city, had fallen furiously upon those statues of saints which had escaped at the Reformation, while all the roughs in the place had poured in through the doors to join in the frolic, not without hope of finding spoil. When, however, they found that all the plate had been previously removed, and that the chests which they had expected to be full of booty contained nothing but bones, they snatched up these, and in sheer mad mischief hurled them at the beautiful stained glass windows in the choir. Joscelyn's first thought was of William of Wykeham's tomb. Fighting a passage through the crowd in the nave, he made his way to the well-

known chantry, where a desperate struggle was going on. Already, apparently, some of the statues within had been dragged to the ground and shattered to pieces, but the effigy of the founder of the college was still unharmed, and the Parliamentary Colonel Fiennes, himself a Wykehamist, was making a gallant effort to save it from destruction. Mindful of his own school-days Joscelyn rushed to the rescue; the attackers were driven back, and he stood side by side with Colonel Fiennes guarding the door of the chantry with drawn sword, and watching distastefully enough the havoc that was going on all around.

With much difficulty Waller contrived to exclude the mob, after which the soldiers became more manageable, and before long, being really in need of food and rest, they began to make preparations for the night, and the confusion ceased. The cathedral afforded too convenient a resting-place to escape use as sleeping quarters for the men, but the officers received orders not to permit the defilement of the place which had so

outraged all people of any refinement during the autumn occupation of Worcester Cathedral by some of Essex's troops. Still, there was much that jarred upon one of Joscelyn's temperament and training. He was without his father's intense feeling of reverence for outward things; he cared very little for forms and ceremonies, and would have worshipped just as contentedly in an unconsecrated as in a consecrated building. But there was a certain sense of the fitness of things, a certain love of having all things done decently and in order, that was strongly ingrained in his nature, so that it hurt him grievously to see the soldiers carrying off the rails for fuel and piling up provisions on the communion-table, not because he thought the act wrong, but because it offended his good taste; just as in the days of his childhood, when the communion-table had stood in the centre aisle of the church at Shortell, he had detested to see the greasy hats of the villagers thrown upon it.

When the early winter day closed in,

he volunteered to be one of the additional officers who were to sleep in the cathedral in case of further outrages, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes having undertaken to guard the college buildings. Waller, as he bade him good-night, noticed his downcast look and lingered a minute; he had much in common with Joscelyn, being a man of quite unusual love of the beautiful, fond of music, fond of pictures.

"The church itself is unharmed," he said, "and we were in time to stop some of the worst outrages. As for these statues of saints, I have no power to prevent the men from destroying them. You know Parliament approves their demolition, and will belike ere long issue an order expressly commanding the pulling down of all market crosses and the destruction of images, for they find that many of the ignorant folk still continue to bow down to them, contrary to God's command. In this matter we must ignore our personal likings and fold them up in the obedience of a soldier."

"I am glad, at least, that the tomb of

William of Wykeham is unharmed," said Joscelyn. And many thoughts surged through his mind as one of Waller's chaplains gave out the evening psalm, and through the great cathedral there rang the manly voices of the Puritan soldiers in—

> "O come and let us now rejoice
> And sing unto the Lord."

There was something cheering to him, something that took him out of the limited view of the present, in the familiar verses—

> "His people doth He not forsake
> At any time or tide,
> And in His hands are all the coasts
> Of all the world so wide.
>
> And with His loving countenance
> He looketh everywhere,
> And doth behold the tops of all
> The mountains far and near.
>
> Oh, come, therefore, and worship Him,
> And down before Him fall,
> And let us kneel before the Lord
> The which hath made us all."

And then for some minutes perfect silence reigned in the cathedral, while every soldier knelt in prayer.

The night accommodation was far from luxurious, yet it was better than that which they often had in the open air, and Joscelyn was soon sleeping soundly in the nave beside William of Wykeham's chantry, with his head resting on the narrow doorstep, and his cloak wrapped closely round him, for the night was bitterly cold.

Now as he slept he dreamed a dream.

It seemed to him that as he was lying there in the nave of the cathedral, thinking very sorrowfully of the havoc that had been made that day, some one called to him to rise. He started to his feet and found an aged bishop standing close by him, and looking steadfastly into the face he recognised the well-known features of William of Wykeham. The bishop did not speak, but just smiled on him in a friendly fashion. Joscelyn was seized with a sudden fear lest some misapprehension should cause this kindness, and he said—

"It was Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, my lord, that saved your tomb from dishonour. It was he who sent the messenger to Sir

William Waller, and he who first thought of the defence."

"I know that," said the bishop, "but you promptly aided him—I saw you. And now many thoughts trouble your heart. Go up yonder for your answer."

He pointed towards the choir, but when Joscelyn turned back and would have asked a question as to what sort of answer he could possibly find there, William of Wykeham had passed noiselessly away. Not a sound was to be heard save the breathing of the tired soldiers and the sighing of the night wind as it blew through the broken windows. Joscelyn walked slowly between the ranks of sleeping men in the nave, and pacing eastward made his way through the choir, wondering where his answer was to come from. Suddenly he perceived that beside the communion-table stood a cloaked figure, and he wondered whether one of the officers had been roused from sleep, and for a moment half fancied that Colonel Fiennes had returned; then something in the manly, upright bearing made him think of Hamp-

den, and he pressed eagerly forward. If only he could ask Colonel Hampden's opinion, and know how he felt in being pledged to work with those who in many ways so greatly went against his personal likings! Could it possibly be Hampden? But as he approached he saw that it was not so, for this man's hair was unflecked with grey and of another colour—darker than his own, lighter than Dick's. Still he had an unaccountable feeling that it must be some one he knew, and was puzzled as he drew nearer to find that the face was one he had never seen either in life or in pictures. It was the face of a hero, the face of one who had conquered; and Joscelyn, soldier-like, found himself wondering in what war this man could have been. "Here is one who ought to rule," he thought to himself, "for in truth he is a king of men." But the man was clad like any ordinary man—indeed, his simple garb would have been scorned by many of the rich men of those times.

He was looking thoughtfully down at the soldiers' rations heaped on the communion-

table. Joscelyn wondered at his calmness, but when their eyes met he wondered no more, for there was something far-seeing and all-embracing in the hero's look, something which said more plainly than words, "I see the soul of goodness in things evil." The face was the face of a man one would not scruple to stop in the street to ask the way, it was so truthful and kind; the manner was full of considerateness, yet perfectly genuine and free from artificiality.

Joscelyn gave him the customary greeting of the day, and began eagerly to tell him of his perplexities; it was impossible to feel the least reserve or the least fear when face to face with one who evidently understood. When he paused there was a brief silence. Then, with a kind glance at him, the man said—

"You are weary and homesick. Many troubles have of late come to you, and it is quite natural you should grieve when those with whom from a sense of duty you have sided wreck and destroy what was meant to be to the glory of God."

"The place is dear to me," said Joscelyn. "As a lad I came here to worship. I cannot endure to see it spoiled."

"I know—I understand you—I remember," said the man; and his eyes filled with tears, so that Joscelyn wondered of what past scene he could be thinking, but found great comfort in his sympathy.

"Why must such things be?" he cried. "Why must they be?"

"What has been abused must ofttimes be seemingly destroyed," replied his companion. "Be patient. There is a time of restitution."

Joscelyn glanced round the desolated place, and for the first time noticed that the ground was strewn with books—prayer-books, psalters, and Bibles. He picked up one of these last and looked indignantly at its torn and mangled leaves.

"See!" he cried; "they have even torn the Word of God!"

"Is there aught new in that?" said the man, sadly and with a strange far-away look in his eyes. "Has not that been done by

friend and by foe, by believer and by unbeliever, these many years?"

Joscelyn was silent and began to muse on the meaning which lay beneath his companion's words.

"Remember," added the man, in the tone of one making excuse for those beloved, "that they who did this were ignorant and knew not what they did, but thought they were serving the truth. I judge them not, neither should you. The Word of God has to receive wounds which pain Him more than these. Come and see."

He led the way down the steps and they passed among the sleeping soldiers; most of them slept soundly but some dreamed, and Joscelyn was astonished to find that he could see hovering over such the subject of the dream. They paused beside a young soldier who was stretched at full length on one of the benches. Above him hovered three men branded in the cheeks and forehead, and with their ears cut off.

"This soldier," said the man, "was a London apprentice, and stood in Palace

Yard when honest men still living on this earth suffered in the pillory for their opinions. You see how cruelly these temples of God were marred."

They passed on till they came to the bishop's throne, and here, with his head resting on the cushions, lay a grey-headed officer; above him hovered the likeness of a fair young girl with downcast eyes and cheeks wet with tears.

"It is his daughter," said the man, sorrowfully. "She was ruined by a false-tongued courtier at Whitehall."

They passed on, stepping over the *débris* of many images, and paused by a white-haired veteran of fourscore years; Joscelyn remembered that he had seen this bitter-looking fanatic deliberately hew down a beautiful representation of the shepherds worshipping the Babe of Bethlehem. But above him there floated now a dream-picture which made the two spectators shudder. It was the figure of a young woman bound to a stake; flames were licking her bare feet.

"It is his mother," said the man, in a voice that trembled with emotion. "As a little lad he saw her burnt at Smithfield. He cannot forget."

They walked on a little farther, till Joscelyn paused before a tomb on which had been a representation of Christ at the grave of Lazarus, which he well remembered and had always specially loved to look upon.

"They have destroyed the Christ!" he cried in real grief. "Surely they might have reverenced this! This that Dick and I both held dear in the old days!"

The man smiled kindly. "I am glad you held it dear," he said. "Yet after all there was little need of the stone image when the living presence was with you—neither was it a true likeness. The statue represented an unnatural face, not a true man's face—a man tempted, troubled, lonely like you."

"Was He in truth really tried as I am?" said Joscelyn in astonishment, for like most people he had never grasped the truth that Christ, when born on the earth, had emptied Himself of all that could give Him advan-

tage over others, that He was literally "of no reputation," and was "found in fashion as a man."

"Is it not so written?" said his companion.

"Yet I ever thought it was far easier for Him," said Joscelyn. "Was He, save for sin, just like one of us? Had He in truth all the natural wishes and cravings of a man? Had He really to struggle for self-control? Was He truly tempted as we are?"

"In all points," said his companion. "But I see you do not yet understand what you have seen this night. Let it teach you that humanity is the temple of the living God. Let it show you who is in truth the Word of the Father. Let it prove to you that in harming one another you crucify Him afresh, that in serving one another you are serving Him."

"How do you understand so well, sir? How do you know?" said Joscelyn.

His question remained unanswered for a minute; but as they stood there beside the

shattered image of the Christ he felt constrained to look into his companion's face, and it seemed to him that he saw there the well-spring of all wisdom and power and love. It was as if new life were being poured into him.

"How can such as you feel for one like me?" he faltered.

The man looked into his eyes and smiled with the strong patience of one who has learned to wait.

"Am I not your kinsman?" he said.

Then at last Joscelyn knew that he was talking with the Hero of Love, and knowing in what fight this conqueror had overcome, and for the first time noticing that marks of the conflict were still left, he thought his heart must have broken with love and gratitude had not a strong hand clasped his closely—had not he realised that love is immortal.

"My Lord and my God!" he cried.

And with the words on his lips he awoke.

The cold grey light of the winter's morn-

ing filled the cathedral and lit up the fallen statues and the unharmed effigy of William of Wykeham. Birds flew singing through the shattered west window, and the bugle sounded the reveille.

CHAPTER VII.

Do you call it power in a child, if he is allowed to play with the wheels and bands of some vast engine, pleased with their murmur and whirl, till his unwise touch, wandering where it ought not, scatters beam and wheel into ruin? Yet what machine is so vast, so incognisable, as the working of the mind of a great nation? what child's hand so wanton as the word of a selfish king?—RUSKIN.

"*Written at the Court House,*
"*Katterham,*
"*This 12th day of January.*

"MY DEAR FAITH,

"I was right glad to hear that my letter, telling you of our betrothal, had been received by you, for in truth I ever commit a letter to the post now-a-days with many misgivings, since not only the chances of war are against its safe delivery, but grandfather says the dispute as to the postmaster

still occupies the Parliament, and that though the sequestration of Witherings (to whom we owe so much in the establishing of the eight main postal roads) hath been declared by vote to be illegal, yet the quarrel has led to an affray in which some laid violent hands on the mails, and this may belike happen again. I wish from my heart we were on one of the direct roads, then we should with much less delay receive our letters; still we should not grumble, being much better off than would have been the case seven years ago. Moreover, we have found a trusty private messenger, whom we may lawfully employ between ourselves, one Temperance Turner, who, out of gratitude to my dear love, will tramp all over the country betwixt him and me. Since I last wrote you I have seen Mr. Richard Heyworth. He is staying at Bletchingley, and most good-naturedly walked over here, bearing me a letter from Joscelyn. The letter contained heavy news, for he wrote as a prisoner in Farnham Castle, but since then I have heard of his

speedy release, so you need not be troubled at it. Mr. Richard Heyworth is a fine young officer, with very good manners, and in his way of speaking he resembles Joscelyn, but otherwise they are not much alike. He was full of kind thoughts for us in our trouble and ready to serve us in any way, and even had he been a churl I must have liked him because of his devotion to his brother. They are to each other like David and Jonathan, and it is a sore grief to them that in this war they are opposed to each other. He had with him a hunchback, the messenger of whom I writ—Temperance Turner—by whom I sent a letter to Farnham, and to my great joy the man came back at Epiphany bringing a long letter from Joscelyn at Chichester. He has already seen much of the horrors of war, but he likes Sir W. Waller, his new commander, and wrote me many matters of interest with regard to the siege of Winchester. From Winchester they marched to Chichester, having a weary time of it, for there was a great downfall of heavy rains, and he says

that for nine days and nights they lay in the open fields, and never knew what it was to have a dry garment on them. He spent his Christmas day in the siege of Chichester, but on the 29th the city yielded, the King's party being worn out and unable to support the fatigue of the duty, all of which lay upon them, as the citizens were mostly favourable to the Parliament and ill-pleased at the Royalist commander for exposing them to the miseries of a siege. Joscelyn says there, as also at Winchester, great damage was done to the cathedral, the soldiers breaking the painted window facing the bishop's palace, and smashing the monuments, breaking in pieces the communion-table and the railings about it, the pulpit and the benches and pews, tearing up Bibles and prayer-books, and acting like wild school-boys too long kept at their tasks. All of which you can fancy is highly distasteful to one of his turn. But he writes, 'Better they should do this than fall upon helpless women and children, as is too often the case when conquerors enter a city after a siege.'

It seems a sad pity that the fine organ in the cathedral should have been pulled down by Waller's men, and it must have been little to the liking of the commander, who, Joscelyn says, hath a great love for music. But the leaden pipes were like to be of much use, so down it must come! When will this weary war be over? I grow sick with the thought of the dangers that may too likely beset you at Gloucester. Would that by some magic I could hear from you each day! But belike that would not be good for our faith, we might grow to depend on the magic message rather than on God's care and our communion through Him.

"Joscelyn is now marching into Wiltshire. God send he may not fall ill with this bitter cold weather; but he is strong and hardy, and a good courage carries one through many discomforts. We heard this day from London that the Parliamentary garrison at Cirencester had resisted and repulsed the Royalist attack. This is good hearing, yet I like not to think of the war so near your parts. Christmas was the most desolate I

ever knew. Heavy rain fell all the day, and though the carol-singers came round at dark and the tenants all received their plum-puddings on the eve, yet there seemed no merriment, save among the children, who, thank God, can forget the cloud overshadowing the land. Nurse was much pleased with your message. She is just turning your blue cloak for Hester, who had out-grown hers. I marvel that your mother-in-law expected a bride to be clad in sad-coloured raiment, nor can I see that there is aught carnal in bright colours; so long as a dress be modest and not over costly, why must it be sombre in hue? You should quote to her Joseph's many-coloured coat; and is there not much as to bright colours in the book of St. John's Revelation? From Chichester Joscelyn sent me by his messenger a betrothal ring. 'Tis of plain gold, and the posy is '*Pro Christo et patria*,' than which methinks we could have no better motto. I long to talk of many matters with you, dear Faith. Hester is over young, and were it

not for Mrs. Ursula and for nurse, who are both of them ever ready to talk of Joscelyn to my heart's content, I do not know how I should fare. Mrs. Arbella shakes her head over our betrothal, and says she had hoped I had made up my mind to single blessedness. Sometimes when she talks with that pitying contempt of men, as though they were all far beneath her, I feel moved to anger, but grandfather says 'tis but natural, since her father was a self-willed tyrant and made her youth miserable. Dear Mrs. Ursula is different, and though even she thinks most men bad, she can be brought to admit that there are exceptions. Yesterday we had a visit from the Evelyns, of Wotton. Mr. John Evelyn was as witty and pleasant as ever. While his elder brother talked with grandfather, he walked with me in the garden, telling me of many improvements he hopes to make at Wotton with his brother's permission, notably a fish-pond with an island upon it, and some arbours, besides a room which he may use as a study. I was

glad to talk with him, feeling that day sad at heart about Joscelyn's danger. I told Mr. Evelyn of our betrothal and of my anxieties; and though, as you know, he holds not with the Parliament, no one could have been more kind and understanding.

"Also he remembered seeing Joscelyn at the time of your wedding, and spoke warmly of him. He explained to me his own position. His uncle, Sir John Evelyn, of Godstone, is of course all for the Parliament, but Mr. Evelyn holds on most points with the King, though disapproving of his arbitrary measures. He therefore holds aloof from the war, and lives retired at his brother's house at Wotton, journeying now and again to London. He bade me turn my thoughts to gardening when anxious and troubled. 'The air will be medicine to you,' said he, 'and the work will cheer your spirits, and in watching the slow growth and improvement of your pleasance you will learn that 'tis only ill weeds grow apace.'

"By the next opportunity we shall send you six robes and the shifts and flannels which Monnie wore as a babe. Nurse takes the opportunity when the children are safely tucked up at night to make you two wondrous smart lying-in caps, in which you will be able to receive all your Gloucester friends when they come for the cake and caudle. Have a care of yourself, dear Faith. I could wish you were here in this remote country-side, where, as Mr. Evelyn said the other day, it seems scarce credible that we are not above eighteen miles from London, and where, since the attack on the house last August, we have been in no way troubled by the war. My grandfather sends you loving messages and his regards to your husband.

"Your loving sister,

"CLEMENCY CORITON.

"P.S.—I forgot to say that Joscelyn is in somewhat better case with Sir Thomas Heyworth, who spoke kindly to him in their

mutual trouble about Rosamond's illness. She came near dying of a fever, but is now almost recovered. I have a great wish to see her; she must be an extraordinary brave child."

CHAPTER VIII.

No tame and tutored echo she
  Of all upon her lover's lips:
She scorns to bear across her soul
  The changeless shadow of eclipse!
But full of fire and living help,
  Discovers to my blinder eyes
Green alleys that may wind—who knows?—
  To peace and paradise.—NORMAN R. GALE.

ONE February day, when the lamp had just been lighted in the study, and Clemency had begun her usual hour's reading with her grandfather, they were startled to hear sounds as of some visitor arriving. No guest had been bidden, and it was late in the day for any one to arrive from the neighbourhood. Clemency had a sort of wild hope that it might be her lover, but this vain imagination was speedily dispelled, for the serving-man threw open the door

of the study and announced Mr. Bennett. Any one more utterly unlike Joscelyn it would have been impossible to conceive, for while the one was eager, boyish, and high-spirited, the other was old for his age, grave and sober, and seemed never to shake off his business cares. And now a fresh anxiety seemed to weigh heavily upon him, so that she instantly guessed that something was amiss with Faith.

"You bring us ill news?" she said, tremulously.

"Nay," he said, "you must not be frightened. But we are anxious about Faith, very anxious. She had a great shock; some foolish body describing in her presence all the horrors that went on when the King's troops pillaged Cirencester. And when the next day the army advanced to Gloucester and summoned it she was grievously upset."

"Gloucester summoned?" said Sir Robert. "We had heard nothing of that."

"'Twas on the 2nd of this month," said Christopher Bennett; "but Colonel Massey

and the Mayor having replied twice that they held the city for the Parliament and would only deliver it upon an order from those in authority, Prince Rupert retired to Cirencester again, and for the time all is peaceful. As soon as I could safely leave Faith I came to London, and while there I obtained a pass from Parliament permitting Mistress Coriton with attendants to travel, being not without hope, sir, that you would allow me to take my sister-in-law back to Gloucester, where, in truth, she is sorely needed. I know not how my poor little wife is likely to fare in her trouble, and her cry is all for Clemency."

"We were never parted before," said Clemency, "and I saw from her latest letter that she was sad at heart. Oh, grandfather! pray let me go to her."

"It is an ill time for a maid like you to be travelling," said Sir Robert, doubtfully.

"But Christopher will be there to take care of me," said Clemency, "and I have no fears. Charlotte will take good care of the children, and—if you would spare me——!"

"That is not the question," said Sir Robert, "but ought I to permit you to run such a risk? As for the children, they will be safe enough here, and doubtless Mrs. Ursula and Mrs. Arbella will take compassion on them. Charlotte, if I mistake not, will insist on going with you."

"I had never thought of that," said Clemency. "May I speak with her at once, and see what she says to the plan?"

Having received Sir Robert's permission she hurried up to the third floor, where, in the nursery, she found to her relief that Charlotte Wells, the faithful servant who had been in the family ever since Clemency's own babyhood, was sitting alone at work.

"The children are having a game of 'All hid,'" explained the nurse, glancing up for an instant, her needle flying in and out of her work as she talked. "'Tis the best game to keep them happy these cold days when they are kept to the house. Was that a news-letter brought to the house a while ago? I thought I heard a horseman ride up."

Then Clemency told of Mr. Bennett's arrival and of the news about Faith. Charlotte let her busy needle rest for a minute, and listened attentively. She was a woman of about forty, dressed in a straight linsey gown and neat white cap and apron. Any one looking at her must have been struck with the intelligence and the kindliness of her face; there was something characteristic, too, in her brisk active movements, but only those who had long known her fully understood the beauty of her character, with its rare unselfish devotion, its absorption in the needs of other people. Sir Robert had surmised rightly; Charlotte at once proposed that she should go to Gloucester, and before Clemency could even hint at difficulties or dangers, the busy needle was flying in and out of the work again, and she was rapidly settling what must be done.

"I will finish off this cloak, there is not more than half-an-hour's work in it," she said, in her brisk voice, "and then, my dear, I must pack our clothes as closely as may

be, for I know well Mr. Bennett will grumble if we carry much with us. I never yet knew a gentleman that could put up with many packages. As for the robes and the caps and things, why they must go in any case. But there can be no call for you to take more than one complete change of clothes, for there is not likely to be much company to entertain, folks are over-much occupied for amusements now. As for the children, I know the other servants will look well to them, and, my dear, why should you not persuade your grandfather to ask the ladies from the Dower House to stay here while you are gone? They would be company for him, and would help to keep things going rightly in the household."

In the end this was really arranged, and the next morning Mrs. Ursula came hurrying across the wet grass in the park to take a last farewell of Clemency, and receive directions from Charlotte as to the management of little Monnie. Her kind strong face was the first thing which Clemency's eyes rested

on when she woke, somewhat later than usual, after a restless night.

"You look tired, my dear," said Mrs. Ursula, kissing the girl's flushed face, and smoothing back the disordered chestnut hair; "I fear you have been too much excited to sleep well."

"I am glad to be awake," said Clemency, "for I have had naught but ill dreams. Christopher told us last night of the poor prisoners who were dragged by the Royalists from Cirencester to Oxford. Had you heard about them?"

"Nay," said Mrs. Ursula, "we heard merely that Prince Rupert had taken Cirencester. What of the prisoners?"

"Cirencester was pillaged, and as for the prisoners—nigh upon twelve hundred of them—they were thrust into the church without food or drink, many of them being sorely wounded. Some were ransomed, but though the money was received, the officers insisted on their going to Oxford to swell the "triumph," as they called it, and be marched past the King. On

the morrow, they were tied together in couples and driven half-naked along the muddy roads, goaded and beaten as though they were beasts. Among them, Christopher said, were many gentlemen and ministers and townsfolk, besides the regular soldiers and officers. When they got to Witney they were again thrust into the church, without food, for the night, and the next day were driven on to Oxford, and taken with much triumph through the streets, where the King and many of the nobles, besides the people of the city, came out to look upon them, and to smile at their misery. Among them, they say, was a specially handsome man, with very white skin, where it could be seen for the blood of his wounds; he, being too ill to walk, was set naked upon the bare back of a horse, his wounds gaping and his body smeared with blood, yet he sat upright upon the horse with an undaunted countenance, and when near the King a brawling woman cried out to him, 'Ah, you traitorly rogue! you are well served.' Then he, with a

scornful look towards her, uttered a word of reproach and instantly dropped from his horse."

"Dropped down dead, do you mean?" said Mrs. Ursula, with a shudder.

"Yes, at the very feet of the King. And all night I have seen this again and again, and each time the prisoner had the face of Joscelyn."

"Yet it is not likely that he would have been at Cirencester; had Sir William Waller's army been there the place would scarcely have been taken," said Mrs. Ursula, "and certainly Mr. Bennett would have known had it been so."

Clemency admitted that this was probable, and with the help of the morning sunshine and Mrs. Ursula's calm, reassuring voice, she soon escaped from the terror into which her dream had thrown her.

"Oh, if all the King's followers were but like you!" she sighed, throwing her arms round Mrs. Ursula's neck; "yet, how you can find it in your heart to desire the triumph of a king who cares so little for

the sufferings of his people, passes my understanding."

"I honour his office," said Mrs. Ursula. "As a man he hath doubtless some faults, though even you must admit that he also has many virtues."

"He hath great love to his wife and children doubtless," said Clemency, "but there is no special merit in that, most decent men have as much. And they say he is religious, but 'tis, methinks, a strange religion which can permit a man to break faith, to deceive, to be wholly without truthfulness. As to honouring the office, why, if he has abused the office, I should think God would remove him from it as Saul was removed."

"Child," said Mrs. Ursula, "you are young, and the young are hard. Do not judge one the difficulties of whose position you know not. 'Tis no small thing that a prince trained in the corrupt court of King James hath grown up pure-hearted and well-meaning. And now do not let us say more of matters whereon we differ.

Here is your bowl of milk and a manchet, every morsel of which you must eat, for who knows where you will dine or when?"

She bustled about, helping in all the manifold preparations for the journey, and her kind face was the last Clemency's eyes rested on when, mounted on her pillion behind Christopher Bennett, she looked sorrowfully from one to another of the little group gathered at the great door to see them start on their travels. There was her grandfather looking wan and haggard, as if he had slept little, and Hester very white and quiet, and Prue dissolved in tears, and Hal waving his hand and shouting words of good cheer. Lastly there was Mrs. Ursula, trim, erect, vigorous, standing by the large, rounded box-bush, and holding up little Monnie in her strong arms.

The journey was a tedious one, and owing to the position of the King's troops they were obliged to take a circuitous road. Fortunately the weather proved all that could be wished, and spite of the anxiety about Faith, and the many perils of the

way, Clemency contrived to get some hours of real enjoyment during that strange week, as they journeyed along the rough roads in the mild, still February days, with their misty brightness, and their first faint promise of spring.

When they had reached Gloucestershire, the possibilities of enjoyment grew more difficult, for here the country showed marked signs of the wretchedness of war. Several times they passed houses that had been wantonly burnt by the dreaded "Prince Robber," as in these parts he was invariably called, and Clemency was often haunted at night by the sad sights which had forced themselves on her notice during the day's ride; haggard, broken-hearted women, children ragged and half-starved, men suffering from grievous wounds, or hopelessly maimed in the strife.

"You might give them just an alms," suggested Charlotte, whose kind heart ached at the sight of so much misery.

And with the help of her trusty servant Clemency procured at the next inn a hand-

ful of groats, half-groats, and pence in exchange for a crown, and found some pleasure in seeing the sad faces brighten as they received this trifling help. Once as she was riding very wearily on a clear cold afternoon, holding with one hand to Christopher Bennett, and in the other hand keeping a groat ready for the next needy person they met, her eye happened to fall on the motto engraved on the coin, in which the King was described as the Protector of Religion, English Laws, and Free Parliaments. As she mused on the words, it seemed to her more and more difficult to understand the position of Mrs. Ursula and Mrs. Arbella, and recalling all that she had so often learnt from her grandfather of the terrible tyranny and injustice which had caused the present war, her heart grew hot with indignation against the one who was responsible for so much suffering and wrong. Only now did she fully realise how great the evil must have been which led a man like Colonel Hampden to face for the country he so much loved all the horrors of civil

war. Nothing could have led such an one to adopt that desperate course, but a disease that threatened to destroy the liberties of England.

"Clemency," said her brother-in-law, "look yonder! There is the tower of the cathedral."

She turned, and saw with a throb of delight the beautiful tower standing out distinctly against the sunset sky, and in her intense relief at the thought of being near to Faith, her face softened and her indignation died away.

"Mrs. Ursula said the young were hard," she thought to herself. "I hope I shall grow less ready to judge harsh judgments. I will try to think of what she said about the King's ill training, and of what grandfather says of his bad advisers, and the Queen's evil influence. Belike there be but few men who would have acted differently under the same conditions."

A wretched-looking trio by the wayside here attracted her attention: a man with scarred face and but one leg, a woman in

the last stage of exhaustion, clasping in her arms an infant, so tiny that it seemed scarcely human. The sight of its poor little shrivelled face made the tears rush to Clemency's eyes; to her dying day she could recall it. With a word of pity she dropped the groat into the hand of the mother. As for Charlotte, she made Mr. Bennett's man stop his horse, and taking off her own shawl, held it towards the wayfarer.

"Wrap it round yourself and the babe, my dear," she said, in her motherly voice. "'Tis the only chance of saving you."

It was almost dark as they rode over the bridge and through the gateway into Gloucester, and Clemency was so weary that she could scarcely stand when one of the serving-men lifted her from her pillion. They were in the south-east corner of the Close—or, as it was always called, College Green—and in the dim light she could just discern the huge dark outline of the cathedral. Then Christopher Bennett gave her his arm and led her up the path

to a gabled, ivy-covered house, and in a minute she was standing beside the hearth in a snug wainscoted parlour, with Faith clinging to her, half laughing, half crying.

"You are better?" said Clemency, anxiously.

"Yes, yes," said Faith. "And nothing matters now that you have come."

Clemency thought those were the sweetest words she had heard for many a day. And really it seemed as though her arrival had put new life and vigour into poor Faith. She began to look on the bright side of things, and there was so much to talk over with Clemency that she had little time to brood over the horrors of the past or the fears for the future. They contrived to keep from her the ominous news of fighting in the Forest of Dean, and of the loss of the little Parliamentary garrison at Coford; but when Lord Herbert with his army of wild Welshmen actually arrived before Gloucester early in March, it was of course impossible to keep her in ignorance of the danger that threatened them. It was reported that

the Royalists were waiting for the arrival of Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice before actually attacking the city, and day after day passed in monotonous anxiety, and each night the inhabitants knew not what might happen before morning. Faith began to flag terribly, and poor Clemency suffered unspeakably when, by way doubtless of showing their interest and sympathy, every worthy matron who came to the house to inquire poured into her ear the most dismal prognostications, with many sighs and shakes of the head. She was not only full of anxiety about her sister, but in an agony of suspense about her lover. It was nearly three months since she had received any news of him, and though it was reported that Sir William Waller was in Wiltshire, nothing definite was known, and she felt sure that Joscelyn must be either ill or wounded, unless, indeed, his letters had miscarried.

One afternoon, as she sat in the window of the little oak-wainscoted parlour, the sound of a rebeck outside made her start

to her feet. The player was not yet in sight, but the voice was surely that of the hunchback, chanting his invariable psalm—

> "All people that on earth do dwell,
> Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice."

Throwing down her needlework, Clemency darted out, and Temperance Turner, who was scanning the houses attentively, quickly perceived her, and came shambling forward.

"Good-morrow, fair mistress," he said, removing his steeple-crowned hat respectfully. "I have wandered far in search of you."

"Come in, come in!" she cried, eagerly, and Temperance followed her into the parlour.

"All the way to Katterham did I go with a letter for you," he said, "and then hearing you had just gone to Gloucester, I went back with the news to Captain Heyworth, whom I came up with at Bristol, where the Royalist plot to deliver

the city was found out and happily stopped, and the place be now secured by Sir William Waller. And here be a fresh letter for you, mistress, from the Captain, but if I could not find you I was to hand it to Colonel Massey to read."

Clemency, eagerly thanking him, bade him go to the kitchen for food and rest, and hastily unfolding her letter read as follows—

"Dear Heart,—I am grieved that our friendly messenger failed to find you, but Sir Robert sent me a letter by him, telling me of your whereabouts, and though it filled me with anxiety to hear that you are in the midst of the strife, yet I have great hopes that we shall shortly meet, and that your danger will soon be at an end. Make it known to Colonel Massey and to the Mayor that we are now marching to your relief, and that by the 24th we shall attack the Welsh army at Highnam on the one side, and that Sir William desires that Gloucester do at the same time attack them

on the other side. Thus we shall have them at great advantage. This is a strange love-letter, but 'twas thought best to send the communication thus secretly and in a private manner. I trust your sister does well, and that you bore the journey without great discomfort. We have had much marching and counter-marching, with some sharp skirmishes, but since taking Winchester and Chichester no serious siege. Colonel N. Fiennes hath been made governor of Bristol, a vast improvement on his predecessor. Temperance travelled by way of Shortell and brought me a letter from Rosamond, who is now recovered of her sickness. My father still remains at home somewhat out of health, and Dick and Jervis are with Sir Ralph Hopton in Devon or Cornwall. My dearest, I kiss your hands, and rest ever

"Your faithful lover to serve you,

"JOSCELYN HEYWORTH.

"To Mrs. CLEMENCY CORITON,
"At the house of Christopher Bennett, Esquire,
"In College Green, at Gloucester."

The news of this promised succour cheered the sinking hearts of the citizens, though still they were not without anxiety lest Prince Rupert should swoop down upon them before Sir William Waller arrived. But that astute general managed his campaign most skilfully, succeeded in taking Malmesbury, made a feint of marching upon Cirencester, which kept the Royalists at bay, and then turned instead to the Forest of Dean, where, with the aid of thirty flat-bottomed boats which he had brought on carriages from London for the passage of the Severn, he dexterously contrived to effect the crossing of his entire army at Framilode in broad daylight.

Meanwhile at Gloucester the garrison, which had consisted merely of a hundred horse and some two hundred foot-soldiers, had been reinforced by the welcome arrival of two hundred horse from Bristol under Captain John Fiennes. Several sallies were after this attempted, and Lord Herbert's Welsh army suffered a good deal, while the besieged had the strong consolation of

knowing that their help drew nigh. Clemency counted the very hours till the 24th of March, and on the 23rd she went with her brother-in-law to see Colonel Massey and his gallant little band march out of Gloucester to attack the Welsh army at Highnam, and in sick suspense waited through the long day, hearing almost incessant firing, but at nightfall learning that as yet Sir William Waller's army had not arrived. The little band from Gloucester remained through that night at Highnam, and Clemency rightly guessed that all through the hours of darkness her lover was marching swiftly to their relief. She had heard from him of Sir William's almost invariable practice of marching at night, and had laughed at the nickname of the "Night Owl," which he had received from the Royalists.

Great was her delight when, on the morning of the 24th, Christopher Bennett offered to take her to the top of the cathedral tower that they might see what was passing. Walking through the noble

building, the beauty of which did not specially appeal to Clemency's untrained eye, they passed through a narrow doorway to the stone staircase which wound up one of the angles of the great tower. On and on they climbed, past the belfry, past the bells themselves, till at length a sudden burst of light and a boisterous buffeting from the cold March wind met them as the door at the top was thrown back and they stepped on to the leads.

"See," cried Christopher Bennett, in great excitement, "they come! they come!"

And Clemency, looking in the direction which he indicated, saw in the distance what seemed a small dark spot, with now and then a curious flash of light, as the sun struck upon pikes or helmets. "Joscelyn is there," she said to herself. But somehow she could not in the least realise it, could only watch with a strange fascination the steady yet seemingly slow approach of that moving blot on the landscape.

Suddenly there was a flash, a cloud of white smoke, followed by a dull roar, overpowering the rattle of musketry at Highnam. The Welsh must suddenly have realised that they were caught in a trap. They made a desperate attack on the newcomers, while at the same time trying to resist Massey's attack on one of their redoubts. Clemency watched breathlessly. After a time there was a lull in the firing; the army of William the Conqueror, as the Parliamentarians loved to call Waller, marched steadily on.

"The Welsh must have hung out a flag of truce," said Christopher Bennett. "'Tis tantalising to be afar seeing thus much and no more."

Clemency was not sure that she could have borne to watch matters save from a distance.

"Let us come down and tell Faith," she said. "How she will rejoice to know that we are once more in safety!"

Through the remainder of that day the two sisters waited as best they could for

further news. Christopher Bennett did not return for many hours, and the suspense was hard to bear. The evening set in cold and wet; they listened with anxious hearts to the howling of the wind and to the heavy rain driving against the windows; presently Faith heard her husband's step outside.

"Run down, Clemency," she begged. "Ask what tidings he has brought;" and Clemency needed no second bidding, but hurried down the dimly-lighted staircase.

"Do you bring news of Joscelyn?" she cried. But the words had hardly left her lips when in the entrance lobby some one came striding past Christopher to greet her.

"Oh, my dear heart!" she cried in a sudden rapture of surprise and relief. "Is it you?"

As for Joscelyn, he forgot war and weariness and the presence of Christopher Bennett, and only knew that after months of separation he once more clasped Clemency in his arms. It was perhaps not until that moment that either of them fully realised

how entirely they belonged to each other, and it was almost more with the look and tone of a wife than of a recently-betrothed girl that Clemency exclaimed—

"You have been marching all night! and how wet and weary you are!"

"Who would murmur at hard work when this is at the end of it?" said Joscelyn, looking into the sweet hazel eyes which seemed to gaze into his very heart.

And in truth she had never seen him look more strong and manly and full of life than he did at that moment, though his hair hung in a tangled wet mass about his steel gorget, and his eyes, in spite of their bright gladness, told the tale of thirty-six hours without sleep—hours full of deep anxiety and strenuous bodily exertion.

"I am afraid of waking and finding all this but a dream," said Clemency, when, later on, supper being ended, she sat with him beside the hearth in the withdrawing-room. The flickering firelight fell on her chestnut hair, and the two somewhat dim candles in solid silver candlesticks shed a

soft mellow radiance on her delicately pure colouring. In her lover's honour she had put on that second dress which Charlotte had allowed her to bring from home, and the soft folds of grey velvet, relieved at the neck and sleeves by wide ruffles of fine white cambric, seemed to enhance the beauty of her face and figure.

"To me," said Joscelyn, "the war seems like a bad dream, and our love the reality; and yet, did you not share that love of our country which nerves us for the fight, you could never be to me the strength and stay that you are."

"In truth," said Clemency, "we women fight also, but it is our fears that we have to conquer. Sometimes it seems to me an ill omen that I first knew I loved you through deadly terror lest you should be harmed. Your outward foes are perhaps more easily repulsed and kept at bay. They say husbands and wives should be the complement of each other, that their characters should be unlike. What do you think?"

Joscelyn smiled. "I think," he said,

"that God made your patience to cure my impatience, your tenderness to amend my hardness."

"Hush!" she said, laying her finger on his lips with a smile. "For my part I am sure that it is your brave hope that must chase away my coward fear. Oh, Joscelyn! I do pray that I, too, may be true to our motto, and serve Christ and the country."

Joscelyn did not speak, but stooping down kissed her with grave and tender reverence on the lips. He thought to himself that Clemency's prayers were likely to do more for the country than men's swords.

CHAPTER IX.

The Gospel is that Truth in which this kingdom has been happy through a long and rare prosperity. This ground, therefore, let us lay for a foundation of our building . . . There is a ceremony used in the Eastern Churches, of standing at the repetition of the Creed, to testify their purpose to maintain it, not only with their bodies upright, but with their swords drawn. Give me leave to call that a custom very commendable.—Sir John Eliot.

The 25th of March, at that time reckoned New Year's Day, dawned brightly in Gloucester, the sun shone, the citizens rejoiced in their deliverance, and the Blue Regiment of Dennis Wise, the Mayor, was ordered to conduct the Welsh prisoners in triumph from Highnam to the city. But in the gabled house in College Green there was sorrow. Joscelyn, worn out with the

arduous march from Malmesbury and the excitement of the previous day, had slept soundly in his attic-room, but no one else had slept at all, and as he came down the next morning Clemency met him on the landing of the first storey, with a whispered warning to tread softly, for Faith was grievously ill.

"My dearest," he said, following her into the withdrawing-room, where only a few hours before they had talked so happily, "is your sister in such great danger?"

"No," said Clemency, her tears falling fast as she rested her aching head on his shoulder, "they have great hopes that Faith will recover, but her babe is dead—the little son she had longed for. Charlotte has laid him here in the cradle. Look!"

Joscelyn felt a choking in his throat as he saw her draw back the sheet from the face of the lovely little child, born too soon into this distracted world. He, who had learned to look unmoved upon death in its ghastliest forms during his campaign, found his eyes filling with tears as he looked at

the tiny peaceful face of the little stillborn infant.

"'Twould seem less sad had he lived ever so short a time," said Clemency; "but that all her hopes and preparations, all her pain, should end in this! What does it mean? Why does God let such things be?"

"Perhaps He saw that its body was too frail for life here in these troubled times," said Joscelyn. "Perhaps its soul did not need the same training that ours need."

"How you comfort me!" said Clemency, drying her eyes. "Mr. Bennett's mother, who was here an hour ago, spoke as if the babe were naught, as if all were ended, just as though she had spoken of some animal."

"She can scarce then have looked on its face," said Joscelyn. "See how plainly that speaks already of life and character. After all, is it such a matter for sadness that this innocent has gone back to God, never having drawn breath in a world of sin?"

Perhaps nothing could have brought the two more closely together than the subdued

talks which they had during the next few days. Sir William Waller remained in Gloucester for a week, and Joscelyn, though he was hard at work all day, supped and slept at Christopher Bennett's house, contriving each evening to have one of those long uninterrupted interviews with Clemency, the memory of which would have to serve them both through many weary times of separation. One evening, when the anxiety about Faith was over, and the doctor had pronounced her to be in a fair way towards recovery, Christopher induced Sir William Waller to sup with them. Clemency was glad to meet the hero of so many adventures, and the courteous deference of Waller's manner to her made her at once understand Joscelyn's devotion to him, for it was not a mere surface politeness, but the real chivalry of a noble nature revealed in singularly perfect manners.

"I have good news for you, Mistress Coriton," he said, when the greetings were over. "The Welsh prisoners, whose priva-

tions and sufferings have been as little to my taste as to yours, have this day been released on promising not to serve against the Parliament. Between fourteen and fifteen hundred of them left the city just now."

"In truth 'twas impossible to feed them properly," said Christopher. "I am right glad that so many mouths have been removed, and that the churches are empty once more."

"Have all gone?" asked Clemency.

"All but the officers, of whom about fifty will remain here, and a hundred have been sent to Bristol. They must be kept for exchange, but being able to pay for their quarters and food, they are in no hard case. Ha! I see your betrothed questions that statement. He has ever great compassion on prisoners, having tasted the bitterness of captivity himself in the castle which his courage and firmness enabled me to take for the Parliament."

Clemency looked a little surprised, not understanding these words.

"I perceive you have not heard that story," said Sir William. "Captain Heyworth would not sound his own praises, of course, in his love-letters. Presently I will tell you what passed," and the General smiled a little. His slight moustache and short beard did not conceal his mouth. Clemency thought it one of the most pleasant-looking she had ever seen.

He changed the topic with delicate tact, and it was not until Joscelyn had left the room later in the evening to carry a message to the General's quarters, that Sir William told the story of the siege of Farnham Castle, and of Joscelyn's conduct with regard to the despatches.

"I do not understand," said Clemency, "how Mr. Original Smith could desert him like that. We ever deemed him a good man."

"You must not judge him hardly," said Sir William. "I have known many good men yield to sudden panic. Great fear will unhinge a man altogether. There was a strange case of it but the other day, where a

trooper suddenly beaten up at night did most obstinately endeavour to bridle his companion instead of his horse!"

Clemency laughed heartily at this story, but grew grave when her thoughts went back to Original Sin Smith.

"That he should have believed Joscelyn to be a traitor!" she exclaimed; "that is what I find it hard to forgive."

"His story was so plausible," said Sir William, "that I was myself deceived by it. I think the man had truly persuaded himself that family feeling had overcome Captain Heyworth's honour, and I am bound to say that he apologised with great frankness. It was perhaps difficult for one of his somewhat fanatical disposition to credit the sincerity of a man differing from him on many points. Captain Heyworth's tolerant nature is little likely to be comprehended by men of that type."

"How slowly folk seem to understand each other," said Clemency with a sigh, "and how slowly doth the good cause advance amongst us!"

"True," said Sir William; "but what a deal of time is spent in tuning before we can come to hear any music."

His simile appealed to her.

"You think this war is like the tuning of many instruments?" she said, looking into his dark, thoughtful eyes.

"In truth I do," he said; "and God grant that you and I may one day hear the music, and that it be not interrupted, as music so oft is, by the slipping or breaking of a string, or the mis-stopping of a fret."

At the beginning of April, Waller left Gloucester, and the lovers were once more parted. Yet the days of Faith's recovery were not altogether unhappy ones for Clemency. At night, it is true, she went through terrible hours of anxiety when she thought of Joscelyn away on his arduous march among the Herefordshire lanes and the wild Welsh passes, with Prince Maurice's army in hot pursuit. But all day she was with her sister, and Faith clung to her with a warmth of love which even in their

happiest days at Katterham she had never shown. The two had always been specially fond of each other, but yet it was not until this time at Gloucester that their love began to grow and deepen as love must do if it is pure, vigorous, and healthy.

One great bond between them was Clemency's increasing love and respect for her brother-in-law, and Faith's keen interest in her sister's love-story. She would listen with genuine sympathy to all that Clemency told her about Joscelyn, and was most anxious that the marriage should not be long postponed.

"If the King consents to the Parliament's proposals, and the two armies are disbanded," she said one evening, as she lay watching her sister rather wistfully, "why should you not be married at once? I would travel back with you to Katterham, and we would have another wedding at the Court House."

"Yes, if only the King consents to the terms. But both Sir William Waller and

Colonel Massey think it little likely he will do so," said Clemency, twisting the flax on her distaff without raising her eyes.

Faith knew it was because they were full of tears.

"But the Commissioners are still at Oxford," she said, consolingly. "We can at least hope that this long negotiation will bring about some good. And truly, if the war does not soon come to an end we shall be ruined, for food and clothing have grievously risen in price since the King has forbidden trade with Gloucester. I know my mother-in-law thinks me a bad manager, but had she begun housekeeping in war-time perchance she would judge me less severely."

"We are no longer in immediate danger," said Clemency. "And now you will at any rate find it easier to get provisions. Here comes Charlotte with your gruel; she does not mean to let you starve yourself."

"I bring you good news, my dears," said Charlotte, with a beaming face.

"Tidings have reached the Governor that Sir William Waller hath taken Ross, Newnham, Monmouth, and Chepstow; all within the few days since leaving here. They say, everywhere the Royalists fly at his approach."

"Was there no further news?" asked Clemency, anxiously. "No news of killed or wounded?"

"Nay," said Charlotte; "but there seems to have been little bloodshed. At Chepstow, they say, Sir William seized a ship called the *Dragon*, full of treasure."

"That is good hearing," said Clemency. "Now the poor soldiers will, perchance, get their pay; the money had fallen grievously short, I know, and Joscelyn says 'tis well-nigh impossible to keep the men from plundering when both money and provisions are scarce."

"I wonder if Prince Maurice hath come up with them," said Faith. "How I wish we could see what is passing at this very minute! Belike they are floundering along through some rough lane in Wales; or

Joscelyn is out with a foraging party, airing his two Welsh words, 'Barra a chaws.'"

Clemency smiled a little, more from relief at seeing Faith's returning cheerfulness than from any amusement at her suggestion; for, in truth, the feeling was strong upon her that at that moment Joscelyn was facing some serious danger, and though she tried to reason with herself upon the folly of such imaginations, the feeling would not leave her, but weighed upon her when at length, wearied out, she fell asleep; and still weighed upon her when the next morning she awoke.

Joscelyn was at this time much nearer Gloucester than they imagined, for Waller had found it impossible to push far into Wales. He had only about two thousand men with him, and had been unable to garrison the towns he had taken; and now the extreme roughness of the way made his horse and artillery of little use. Moreover, Prince Maurice with his army had contrived to cut off his retreat to Gloucester, so that

a choice of evils lay before him: either he must remain to encounter him in this excessively unfavourable position, or he must force his way through the enemy's quarters. Joscelyn, who knew that his chief was exceptionally skilful in choosing his ground, was quite prepared to hear that he had decided with his usual daring on the latter course.

"'Tis impossible to give them battle here," said Waller, "where every field is as good as a fortification, and every lane as disputable as a pass. Far better make a push to cut through them than be hemmed in among these hills."

It was arranged that the ordnance and the baggage-waggons should cross the Severn at Awst Passage, and it was here that Joscelyn had the good fortune to render real service to his General. More intent on superintending the speedy dispatch of the artillery than on his own safety, Waller allowed his horse to go too near the river's brink, and to the utter consternation of his men the animal plunged

in with him. Being fully armed he was in great peril of his life, and the spectators were so horror-struck that for a moment they seemed paralysed. Joscelyn was the only one who had the presence of mind to free himself from his more cumbrous armour, and, when the General rose to the surface, to plunge into the Severn to his rescue. A great cheer rose from the men when, after a few minutes of breathless anxiety, they saw their beloved General once more in safety, and to his dying day Waller never forgot his deliverance from what had certainly bid fair to prove the jaws of death.

Little was said then, however, for time was too precious to be wasted, and the most perilous piece of work still lay before them. Having seen the artillery safely started across the river they returned to Chepstow, dried their soaked clothes as best they could, made a hasty supper, and started on their dangerous adventure. Orders had been sent that the main body of the army should join them in the forest by two in

the morning. Waller hoped thus to be able to beat up the enemy at Newnham in the darkness, and true to his agreement reached the appointed place with the vanguard precisely at the hour he had named. Not a sign of the main body was to be seen; they drew up and waited, straining their ears to catch the first sound of advancing troops. Nothing was to be heard save the whistling of the wind in the forest trees, and a slight stir in a lonely farmhouse which stood in a clearing just in advance of them. The frightened country-folk cautiously opened their casements and peered out into the darkness to see what was passing, the dogs barked, and terrified children woke and made a piteous wailing.

Sir William dismounted and began to pace to and fro impatiently.

"Come, Heyworth," he said, "a brisk turn after your cold bath will not be amiss; and truly this east wind pierceth to one's very marrow."

For some time they walked up and down, Waller pausing every now and then

to speak to the men and to cheer their hearts.

"They can't sing to keep themselves awake, since quiet is our aim, but let them light their pipes," he said. "'Twill serve to pass the time."

"Sir," cried Joscelyn, "I hear horsemen in the forest; surely, at last, they come."

Waller paused, and in the stillness of the night they heard the welcome sound of horsemen and the clinking of arms. The spirits of the men revived, and Joscelyn, to whom waiting of any sort was specially distasteful, felt his heart bound within him at the prospect of speedy action. But a sudden disappointment chilled his gladness; looking towards the approaching horsemen he saw, to his dismay, that instead of being Parliamentary troopers they were merely a gang of peaceful countrymen, going through the forest with their pack-horses for charcoal, while the clinking of arms proved to be nothing but the rattle of the trappings on their pack-saddles.

Some laughter arose from the mistake,

and the soldiers advanced a little farther, then again halted, passing the weary time as best they could in smoking and chatting. The first faint grey of dawn by this time streaked the sky, and Sir William's anxiety became intense. Still nothing was heard of the expected troops.

"I'll be bound," he said, wrathfully, "that some stupid fellow's drowsiness is at the bottom of this long delay. They have been caught napping, I dare swear. Sluggish souls! How long will they lie lazing?"

"Perchance, sir, the orders miscarried," said Joscelyn.

"And while some careless officer is drowsing," said Sir William, "the devil is hunting; and in good truth he hath a way to hunt souls with pillows and night-caps. Some folks seem to forget that life consists in action. God never created us to live in a feather-bed!"

Joscelyn smiled a little at his chief's ardour, and guessed that his surmise as to the delay was correct, for the men were

terribly in need of rest, and it was likely enough that those away from Waller's inspiring presence would yield to the strong craving for sleep.

Unfortunately it was only too probable that Prince Maurice's army might swoop down upon the vanguard, and weary as the men were it was impossible to allow them to rest, since at any moment they were liable to be surprised. Moreover, to the last Waller hoped that the main body would join them in time. When at last the night had passed and the sun had risen, Joscelyn saw that his face was grey with anxiety, and knew that he had the gravest doubts whether they should ever come out of the forest alive. Still his presence of mind did not forsake him. The men breakfasted, and Joscelyn managed to cater fairly well for his General, who composedly made a meal while watching Prince Maurice's men gathering to oppose him. The waiting in the darkness was bad enough, but this desperate waiting in the full light of day and in sight of the enemy

taxed the courage of all. It was with the most intense feeling of relief that at length they were warned of the approach of the long-delayed main body, and, wasting no time in reproaches, Waller instantly gave the word to advance. His vigorous face and form, his cheerful voice, filled the men with confidence; they knew that the General under whom they had so long fought and conquered would not desert them in this desperate strait, but would bring his army safely through the forest if it were possible, and if not, would die with them there.

Joscelyn was never able to give any clear account of the day that followed; he only knew that with the utmost skill and presence of mind Waller somehow contrived to force a way right through the army of Prince Maurice; could only remember his own confused and perilous share in the work, as he galloped hither and thither with messages from the General, and finally could recall the relief of seeing the tower of Gloucester Cathedral growing more and

more distinct as they advanced, until, two miles from the city, they were met by Massey and some infantry, who had heard of their peril, but, finding them safe, advanced to Tewkesbury, leaving the wearied troops for a night's rest at Gloucester.

"What can such a day be like?" asked Clemency, as that evening the lovers sat hand-in-hand in the gabled house. "It sounds like a terrible game of 'All hid,' more than like the sober warfare one has ever pictured in one's mind."

"In truth, I think it was not unlike a game of chess, with Sir William Waller and Prince Maurice as the players, and the rest of us as the pieces," said Joscelyn. "Being but a piece, one has but a vague notion of the whole, that is why I can give you no clear account of the day. It is to me little but a series of desperate gallops, now in this direction, now in that, with orders to the different officers. Cut of the whole day I see but a few things with any distinctness. I see the face of a dead Cavalier, lying white and stiff upon a flowery bank; I see some

of our forlorn hope away down a grassy forest glade, falling beneath the Royalist swords; I see Sir Arthur Hazlerigg soundly rating one of his men for some negligence, and cut short in the midst of his reproof by his horse being shot beneath him; I see Sir William's eager look of triumph when with but slight loss he had safely brought us out of the enemy's hand; and I see the strange contrast betwixt a quiet nook in the forest where the sward was all sprinkled over with starwort and bluebells, and the trees were just coming into leaf, and the birds singing, while but a quarter of a mile farther one was plunged into a sharp skirmish, with the rattle of musketry, the clash of steel, and men shouting, 'God with us,' and 'St. George for Old England.'"

"I wish," sighed Clemency, "that you had a less dangerous post."

"None other would so well please me," said Joscelyn, "and methinks we have small cause to complain, when throughout the campaign I have escaped without one wound. My poor horses have been less

lucky. Did I tell you that the roan was shot under me in Wales?"

"No," said Clemency, with a shudder. "Ah, Joscelyn, it seems to me that you ever escape but narrowly. What is your new horse?"

"I picked him up at Abergavenny, a fine chestnut, whom we have dubbed Latimer. He did good service to-day in the forest; with a less swift horse I should scarcely have fared so well, and might likely enough have been dying now alone in the darkness instead of sitting here with you in this paradise."

"Yet to-morrow you must go once more," said Clemency.

"Yes, to-morrow we attack Tewkesbury, and later on shall besiege Hereford. You must not grudge us our active work, dear heart, for in truth war would be to me intolerable, with all its suffering and separation, could one not feel that by fighting we do strike a blow on behalf of the liberty and progress so grievously endangered by the King's tyranny."

"Liberty and progress be, as you say, fair things, and yet, Joscelyn, even for them how could I bear to lose you?" said Clemency, clinging to him. "They seem far away and vague, I cannot feel that they matter much in comparison."

"*Pro Christo et patria*," he said, glancing at the graven letters on her ring. "There be two claims which were prior to mine. You belonged to Christ and the country before ever I belonged to you and you to me."

"Your serving is more direct," said Clemency; "perchance that is why 'tis easier for you to realise matters. And yet direct warfare would but ill suit women-folk. I should never have been among the maidens who crowned Judith with a garland of olive for killing Holofernes. Though truly she must have had a noble thought in her mind. Did you ever mark the words of her prayer where she speaks of God's character?"

"No," said Joscelyn, "I do not remember it."

"She says, 'For Thy power standeth not in multitude, nor Thy might in strong men; for Thou art a God of the afflicted, an helper of the oppressed; an upholder of the weak, a protector of the forlorn, a saviour of them that are without hope.'"

Joscelyn was silent, musing on the strange beauty of the words, and thinking of the tyranny under which England had so long groaned.

CHAPTER X.

> He who though thus endued as with a sense
> And faculty for storm and turbulence,
> Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
> To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE negotiations at Oxford having utterly failed, peace seemed little likely as yet to come to the country. Waller, still terribly hampered by want of money, returned to Gloucester no less than three times during the next two months, after having captured Tewkesbury and Hereford, and unsuccessfully attempted to take Worcester. Early in June he received orders to march into the west, but Joscelyn, not a little to his satisfaction, was despatched to London, partly on a matter concerning the imprisonment of Lord Scudamore, one of the Royalists

who had honourably given himself into Waller's hands at Hereford, and who, much to Sir William's regret, had been treated with scant consideration by the Parliament; and partly to see to private matters connected with the inheritance bequeathed him by old Mr. Gainsborough.

He had leave for three weeks, and had set his heart on meeting Hampden once more; nor was he to be disappointed of his hope, for on the very first night of his arrival, going to Westminster to the house of Sir Robert Pye to deliver Waller's letter relating to Lord Scudamore, he met him face to face.

It was late, and the servant, having carried his name to the master of the house, ushered him into a somewhat dark room, where his host and another gentleman sat writing by the light of a single lamp. Joscelyn, bowing to Sir Robert, presented his letter, then bowed to his companion, in the imperfect light not at all discerning his features or greatly thinking about him, for indeed his mind was full of his errand.

Suddenly he felt a hand on his shoulder.

"Has my young friend forgotten me?" said Hampden. Then, smiling a little at Joscelyn's fervent greeting, "I have often thought of you," he added, "and wondered how you fared."

Plucking the shade from the lamp he looked scrutinisingly into the bright, hopeful face of his *protégé*, almost marvelling to find that after these long months of arduous strife he should still be "ruddy and of a beautiful countenance and goodly to look to."

"I am glad to find you on an errand of mercy," he said. "In our zeal for justice and judgment we must not forget that. 'Tis a hard case this of my Lord Scudamore, and he is as honourable a man as any that cleave to the King. Were you present at Hereford when he was taken?"

"Ay, sir, I was in attendance on Sir William Waller when he visited Lord Scudamore in the place where he lodged. Rather than escape in the confusion when we entered the city, as many of the other

Royalists did, he honourably waited, and Sir William, treating him as he ever does those within his power with great kindness and civility, did assure him that he was governed by instructions to bid him to London, yet was loth to treat him as a prisoner, but gave him a pass and took his word that he would render himself up to the Parliament, making sure 'twould treat him with equal generosity."

"It is scarce in a mood just now to be generous," said Hampden. "Lord Scudamore, like many another honourable man, will most likely have to bear the sins of his party. I will endeavour to do what I may to procure his exchange, but his case is in great danger of being overlooked in the press of urgent public matters. The discovery of this dastardly plot of Edmund Waller's hath broken down the last remnants of hope that the King may come to a better mind."

"I have as yet heard no details, sir," said Joscelyn, "merely that a kinsman of Sir William Waller's had been arrested for

some plot against the Parliament. Is it Mr. Waller the poet?"

"Ay, and I am in the same boat with Sir William, for he is my kinsman also; moreover, my cousin, Alexander Hampden, is also implicated, though since throughout the contest he has sided with the King he is not so blameworthy. Still he had the perfidy to come up to Westminster with a communication from the King to the Parliament, all the time knowing that a plot was on foot by which on a given night the Royalists in the city and the suburbs were to rise, and, aided by a force of three thousand men which the King had promised to send, were to seize the Lord Mayor, Pym, myself, and sundry other leaders, and deliver up London."

"The King entered on this plot at the very time that he was offering to negotiate, sir?" asked Joscelyn.

"Ay, he did," said Hampden, with a sigh. "It is all of a piece with his conduct at Brentford. We have striven to think that all the ill comes from his Majesty's evil

advisers, but no longer is it possible to hold him guiltless. With such an one at the head the country is doomed."

Coming from the excitement of a long and successful campaign into the burdened atmosphere of that room at Westminster, Joscelyn felt like a boy suddenly coming from the brisk work and pleasure of school to the unveiling of some grievous private trouble in the home. Yet even now in this darkest hour of the Parliament's troubles his sanguine nature saw gleams of light. Was the country after all in so grievous a case, when such a man as John Hampden lived and toiled?

"Ah, sir!" he cried, "if you were but in the place of my Lord Essex, all might yet be well. Under you Sir William Waller would work far more harmoniously. The coldness betwixt him and his Excellency increases every day."

"'Tis not to be wondered at," said Sir Robert Pye, "for they are like frost and fire, and could never agree."

"The times clearly call for reforms and

changes in the army," said Hampden, thoughtfully. "That is a matter upon which Colonel Cromwell hath many times spoken with me. You remember, boy, him that we met at my Lord Lindsey's death-bed at Kineton."

"No one could forget Colonel Cromwell," said Joscelyn, "he seems to have the power of ten ordinary men."

"He is a man ever ready to strike for the oppressed," said Hampden. "They tell me that last month, near Grantham, with but a worn and wearied handful of troopers he utterly routed double the number of Cavaliers, and sent them flying like chaff before the wind. Remember what I said long ago, Oliver Cromwell will be the greatest man of these times."

Sir Robert Pye smiled as he looked into Joscelyn's expressive face.

"I see," he said, turning to his father-in-law, "that Captain Heyworth, in common with many of the rest of us, would vastly prefer to substitute your name, sir, for Cousin Oliver's."

"In common with many of my friends, then, he overrates my abilities," said Hampden, with the genuine humility which so greatly added to his power and influence. "We have sorely missed you in the regiment, boy," he continued. "I would have given much to have had you at the siege of Reading, and afterwards, when what with sickness and delay the men were much in need of officers who could keep up their spirits. While I was away at Westminster a mutinous spirit broke out among them, and I was forced to hurry down to them to set things right. Officers seem to forget that they must keep in touch with their men, who are not mere fighting machines. There is as much skill needed in that particular as in the case of a good rider who knows how to feel the mouth of his horse. I go down to Buckinghamshire in two days' time: can you not go with me? Let us spend the Sunday at Hampden House, that is to say if your business can be accomplished by then."

"I will undertake to do all that may be

done for Lord Scudamore," said Sir Robert Pye, "and as long as Captain Heyworth's private matters keep him in London I hope he will make this house his head-quarters."

Hampden looked pleased at the suggestion, for Joscelyn Heyworth had from the first held a very special place in his affections, while now, in the shadow of his recent bereavement, he felt more than ever drawn to him. Not long after the beginning of the war he had lost his eldest son John; and his favourite daughter, Elizabeth, Mrs. Knightley, had also died, a blow from which he never recovered. When the next morning Joscelyn saw him in the full light of the summer sun he noticed how greatly this trouble had shattered him, and as they walked together to Pym's lodgings in Gray's Inn Lane, Hampden alluded to his bereavement.

They had been speaking of the increasing bitterness of party feeling on each side, and of the horrible slaughter of the inhabitants at Birmingham by the Royalist troops, the first very serious blot upon the civil war,

which on the whole had been conducted with a good deal of restraint and honourable remembrance that the combatants were, after all, fellow-countrymen.

"I confess," said Hampden, "that it had seemed to me more worthy of gentlemen to leave my private sorrows untouched, that they had no call to gloat over the sufferings of a bereaved father. But since this plot of Edmund Waller's I see no hope of any lessening of bitterness, either on our side or on theirs. The Parliament had no sooner discovered it than they took the strong step of impeaching the Queen, a measure which his Majesty must bitterly resent, though in truth I do believe she hath been the most fruitful source of all his troubles. A more disastrous marriage never was. The Queen hath alienated the King from the people and the people from the King; she hath fomented every grievance, and her husband is as wax in her hands. I ofttimes wonder what his Majesty might have been had he but been influenced by a noble, high-principled woman, instead of being dragged into the

intrigues of one educated in the French court. We must not forget in our present misery the great qualities his Majesty hath, a sincere desire to serve God, and much personal courage. 'Twas his misfortune to be born to a position for which he was unfitted, and to be surrounded by those who developed the worst side of his nature, that proud temper and that hopeless insincerity which hath been his own undoing and the bane of this bleeding country."

"Is it true, sir, that Lord Essex is greatly hampered by the want of money?" asked Joscelyn, after a silence.

"Ay, 'tis true," said Hampden. "Money is now being collected for that purpose, and I hope to arrange that it shall be sent down to the Lord-General at Thame next week. With that to stimulate matters I trust he will endeavour to push on to Oxford, for indeed the men have suffered grievously from the long sojourn in low-lying and damp country. There has been great sickness among them."

Joscelyn marvelled at the patient, calm

way in which his companion spoke of the procrastination of Essex, so directly opposed to his own views of what was wise and right. But this was characteristic of Hampden, who, spite of his eager temperament, had gained a masterly control over himself, and was never once heard to murmur at the timid, weak policy of his General, or in any way to heed the clamorous voices which urged that he himself should be raised to the post which Essex had unsatisfactorily filled. His strong sense of duty never permitted him to forget for a moment a soldier's obedience, and though his position on the Close Committee which directed the war made his relations to Essex peculiarly difficult, he contrived with rare modesty and tact to observe the most strict reverence and submission to his chief. Joscelyn begged to be allowed to make some subscription to the fund for the army, and Hampden, who had himself contributed two thousand pounds to the cause, accepted his offer gladly.

"You shall come in with me and speak a few words with Pym," he said, as they

approached Gray's Inn Lane. "He, by the way, is another whose private life hath been most disgracefully handled by the Cavaliers. One might have thought that his austerity and his deep sense of religion were obvious to the most casual beholder, yet these servile court scribblers dare to assert that his friendship with my Lady Carlisle is of a vicious nature. Most truly did Hamlet say, 'Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not 'scape calumny.'"

In after days Joscelyn was glad to think that he had once again looked upon Pym's strangely forceful face, with its strongly-marked brows and piercing eyes; to remember that the hand which had steered the Parliament through such deep waters had grasped his, as with kindly words Pym referred to the despatches which in the previous November he had entrusted to his care, and which had been so honourably guarded. But he went away feeling sad at heart, for already it seemed to him that the great leader was on the verge of breaking down, and those were times in

which men needed untiring strength and energy.

Crossing Lincoln's Inn Fields, where, as if naught disturbed the country, he encountered some most merry little children being drawn by a lacquey in their tiny coach, he walked to his attorney's house, there to arrange many matters regarding the property left him by old Mr. Gainsborough, to procure the contribution which he had promised to the War Committee, and also to sign his marriage contract, a ceremony which in those days usually preceded the marriage by some weeks, and which he deemed it prudent to settle while he was in London. Then, having arranged that the document should be sent to Sir Robert Neal, he was about to take his leave, when his attorney checked him by a question.

"Did I understand you to say that you were shortly going to Somersetshire?" he asked.

"I expect to rejoin Sir William Waller there in a fortnight," said Joscelyn. "Can I serve you there?"

"I should be greatly obliged if you could bear with you a watch bequeathed by Mr. Gainsborough, of Lincoln, to one Mr. Whichcote, recently appointed to the living of North Cadbury, in Somersetshire," said the attorney.

"Mr. Whichcote of Cambridge, do you mean, my former tutor?"

"Ay, 'tis the very man. The watch by some mistake was not sent to him at Cambridge, but was brought here with the other effects that I have in keeping for you. I made it over to Mr. Henry Barrington of the Inner Temple, who was like to be passing through Cambridge, and now I learn that Mr. Whichcote hath gone to Somersetshire."

"I will call then upon Mr. Barrington and procure the watch," said Joscelyn. "To tell truth I shall be right glad of an excuse for visiting my tutor."

Accordingly Joscelyn made his way to the Temple to the chambers of his old Lincoln friend, and finding a paper fastened upon his door, bearing the mystic words

"Gone to the Devil," he turned his steps towards Temple Bar, and soon discovered Henry Barrington in the well-known tavern, chiefly frequented by the gentlemen of the Inns of Court.

They walked back to the Temple together, talking of many mutual acquaintances at Lincoln, and of the recent marriage between Anne Barrington and a kinsman of Bishop Winiffe.

"And as for you," said Barrington, "you must clearly be a favourite of the gods. Everything happens to you; fortunes are left to you by godfathers, Puritan heiresses fall in love with you, all the Roundhead leaders combine to flatter you, and in the war you have developed into a full-fledged hero."

"Nonsense," said Joscelyn, laughing, "the work is prosaic enough, and any man who can stick on a horse may be a soldier."

"But not all of us have the luck to be under 'William the Conqueror,'" said Barrington, "to carry the messages of the

'Night Owl' of world-wide renown. As for me, nothing happens to me; there is nothing doing in the courts, London is a wilderness, the war paralyses our profession, and all we can do is to go to the 'Devil.'"

"Why not throw in your lot with us?" said Joscelyn.

Barrington shook his head.

"I have small doubt that you are in the right," he said, "but leave me to my quiet life, and for heaven's sake don't call upon me to quarrel with my kinsfolk as you have done. Depend upon it, my boy, the country is not worth it. What has the country, after all, done for us? I, for one, am not made of the stuff of which patriots are made. 'Every one for himself, and God for us all.' That is my motto."

Joscelyn reflected that this life of ease and idleness was precisely the one which, not a year ago, he had been so loth to leave.

"Yet you don't know what you miss!" he said, realising how dreadful it would now be to him to go back to the old life

of passive enjoyment and boyish thoughtlessness.

Barrington laughed good-humouredly, and often in after days, when wayworn and hungry, Joscelyn would recall that sleek, good-tempered, lazy friend as he sat enveloped in tobacco-smoke, his feet on the window-seat, and his comfortable voice reiterating injunctions to come and tell him all his adventures when the struggle was over. As in Raphael's "Vision of a Knight," Joscelyn had had his time of ease, Pleasure had lured him with her handful of flowers, but he had turned towards the less enticing figure of Duty, had grasped the sword she offered him, had vowed to defend the Book, and now could only marvel that the other life had seemed to him so fair.

The next day he rode down into Buckinghamshire with Hampden. The June day was bright and sunny, with just enough breeze to make riding pleasant; it reminded them both of the day when, in the previous August, they had ridden down to Hampden House before the raising of the standard.

"What changes since then!" said Hampden, with a sigh.

Joscelyn looked at the fortifications which had been hastily thrown up round London during the autumn, thinking that he referred to them, but the patriot's thoughts were with his dead children, and with many a comrade lost in battle. He spoke very sadly of the death of his friend, Lord Brooke, at Lichfield, giving Joscelyn details which he had not before heard.

"We need fresh men to fill many grievous gaps in our ranks," he said. "But above all 'tis necessary that we have men of truth and honour, men whose religion lies in the consecration of the will to God's service. We have grievously suffered from having in our ranks men of evil and vicious lives, who seek self through this strife, and are not wholly governed by zeal for the cause."

"Men like Colonel Hurry," said Joscelyn, "who, I learn, hath deserted and is now at Oxford serving under Prince Rupert."

"We are well quit of such an one," said

Hampden. "Yet he is capable of doing us much mischief, knowing the country round Oxford very thoroughly, and being well acquainted with all our ways. 'Tis but a short time since he was in command of some of my Lord Essex's horse in more than one skirmish. 'Tis not such as Hurry that one grudges to the other side, but men like Hopton and Fuller and Falkland, men who deceive themselves by thinking that they can cry 'Peace! peace!' when there is no firm basis on which peace can rest."

"Is it true, sir, that my Lord Falkland knew of Waller's plot?"

"I fear 'tis too true," said Hampden. "He doubtless persuaded himself that war justified even that. But I learn from those who of late have seen him that he hath greatly altered, falling into a melancholy, ill-yoked with those unworthy of his noble and tolerant nature, breaking his heart in the service of one who is lacking in all true love of his country or understanding of the people."

Joscelyn glanced at the strong, virile face

of the speaker, and caught the flash of his eyes love-lit with that passionate devotion to England which had moulded his whole life. He remembered the coldly handsome face, the exclusive, unsympathetic manner of another rider, and for a moment the quiet country road seemed to change into the crowded High Street of Lincoln, and in place of the over-arching trees he saw in imagination the Stonebow and the Prison Lane, and John Drake's mutilated face. Above the sound of Latimer's hoofs he heard that awakening cry of "Justice! Justice!" which had touched his manhood and his patriotism into life.

One thing he realised very clearly—two men as absolutely opposed to each other in character as Hampden and the King could by no possibility ever come to an understanding.

"And yet," he said, when at mid-day they paused to rest and dine at a wayside inn, "'tis not only my Lord Falkland who craves for peace. No man, surely, can serve in the war without longing for the time

when one's very dreams will not be blood-stained as now they are."

"True," said Hampden; "the bravest soldier that ever held a pen has well expressed that same craving. Did you ever read the translation of Cervantes' *Don Quixote?*"

Joscelyn was fain to confess that he had never heard of it.

"Well, you should read it, if ever time for reading is yours once more. I recollect being much struck by many chivalrous and noble thoughts in the book, but by none more than by a passage running much after this fashion: 'Arms have for their object and end peace, which is the greatest good that man can desire in all this life. And thus the first good news that the world had was that which the angels gave on the night which was our day, when they sang in the heavens, "Glory in the Highest, and Peace on the earth." This peace is the true end of war.'"

The words kept recurring to Joscelyn all through the following day, which, being a

Sunday, they spent quietly at Hampden House. It was some time since Hampden had been able to visit his home, and just for that one day he seemed to put back from him all cares of State, and entirely to give himself up to his family, not allowing even his sad memories to darken the happiness of their reunion. Again and again, in the sorrowful time which followed, Joscelyn would live in imagination through that strangely peaceful day, which was to them all such a priceless possession. The very atmosphere of the old dining-hall seemed present to him as he recalled their gathering in the morning, the children flocking to greet their father, the servants assembling for family prayers, the patriot's clear mellow voice reading in quiet, unaffected fashion, "Let not your heart be troubled." Then the leisurely breakfast, the genial flow of talk, the absence of that sense of unrest and hurry which of late had become customary to them. And by and by the services in the little, quiet country church, at which the newly-chosen rector, Mr. Robert Len-

thall, son of the Speaker, officiated. The discourse was upon two verses of one of the Psalms for the day—"Under the shadow of Thy wings shall be my refuge until this tyranny be overpast. I will call upon the most high God; even unto the God that shall perform the cause which I have in hand." When the sermon was over, Hampden lingered in the churchyard talking to one and another of his tenants. To them he was not so much the great statesman and leader as the personal friend, the man who had lived among them all his life, sharing their joys and sorrows, ever ready to help them in need, not by reckless almsgiving, but by care and thought and counsel, by the genuine friendship which costs more than a mere dole. It was beautiful to see the love which he evoked among those sturdy Buckinghamshire folk; devotion free from all cringing or servility; honour which only stimulated their self-respect. Mr. Lenthall came back to dine with them, and later on, in the sweet quiet of the Sunday afternoon, they sat in the quaint old plea-

sance at the side of the house, known as King John's Garden, where the fountain plashed gently in its stone basin, and the rose bushes scented the air, and beyond in the park the noble trees lifted their fresh June foliage up to the soft blue of a cloudless sky.

Even old Madam Hampden, the patriot's mother, ventured forth and paced slowly to and fro on the velvety turf, leaning on her son's arm. All through her long widowhood he had been her sole comfort and delight, and it was touching to watch her pride in him and his loving reverence and considerateness for her. The old lady had quickly discovered Joscelyn Heyworth's devotion to his leader, and leaving the Lady Letitia to have some uninterrupted talk with her husband, she asked the young guest to help her back to the house, talking to him very kindly the while, first of his own affairs, but soon falling back to the subject which engrossed her thoughts, her dearly-loved son.

"I remember," she said, as they paced

through the hall to the withdrawing-room, "I remember, Captain Heyworth, in the late King's reign, being ambitious of my son's honour, I greatly desired a peerage for him. There was a multitude of lords a-making—my Lord Dunbar, my Lord Falkland, and a vast number of new creations—and my son might easily enough have had a title; but knowing how they were obtained, he would have naught to do with seeking one, but utterly declined any such notion. And now methinks he chose well to keep to the name handed down to him from Saxon times, and ever connected with this fair estate. And though, maybe, 'tis in part the fondness of a parent that prompts the thought, yet I do think that the name of John Hampden is one which will ever live in the hearts of the people of England."

At supper, perhaps because the shadow of the parting threatened to interfere with the present enjoyment, Hampden's conversation was even more animated than before. His great natural cheerfulness—a sort of

bright joyousness of temperament closely akin to that of his young guest—made them when together like flint and steel. Spite of all the past sorrows, all the future cares, the hall rang with the laughter evoked by their merry talk, and the children's happy faces, and the momentary laying aside of anxiety on the part of his wife and his mother, filled the patriot's heart with pure pleasure.

All too soon the meal was ended, and the old butler came to tell them that the horses were awaiting them at the door. With a cheering word and a tender individual farewell to each member of his family, Hampden for the last time quitted the home endeared to him by so many associations, and mounting his horse rode away with Joscelyn Heyworth to Thame, where Essex had lately taken up his quarters.

CHAPTER XI.

And there . . . gave
His body to that pleasant country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,
Under whose banner he had fought so long.
King Richard II., Act iv., Sc. 1.

The days that followed were somewhat chequered. Joscelyn greatly enjoyed meeting his former comrades once more, and he had the inestimable privilege of being almost constantly with Hampden; but it was trying to witness the patriot's depression when, despite every effort, Essex still remained half-hearted, timid, and supine. Now and again the soldiers would be stirred into a sort of enthusiasm by his presence, and would cry "Hey for old Robin!" But he seemed incapable of promoting any great enterprise, and was conspicuously lacking in

the great qualities of Hampden and of Sir William Waller. The men, disheartened by the sickness which had rapidly thinned their ranks since the siege of Reading, had become sullen and dispirited, and scarcely a night passed but they could descry in the distance the red glow in the sky which showed that Prince Rupert had attacked and set fire to some defenceless place, or beaten up the quarters of some isolated regiment, putting all the luckless soldiers to the sword. Hampden devoted his energies that week to raising the drooping spirits of the army, and to visiting many of the outlying villages and sending strong remonstrances to the Lord-General on the scattered and helpless condition of the pickets. On Friday, the 16th, he visited with Joscelyn the regiments stationed at Postcombe and Chinnor, and, seeing in how exposed a position they were left, despatched his lieutenant to Essex, imploring him to call them in, as well as those troops picketed at Wycombe. On the Saturday, having visited Major Gunter's cavalry at Tetsworth,

and done all that he could to establish a line of communication between the principal regiments, he returned towards evening to Watlington, where he had arranged to pass the night.

"We shall pass through Pyrton," he said, "and will visit my father-in-law, Squire Simeon; he will like to have the latest news of the army."

The sunset light cast a mellow glow over the lovely little church, and Joscelyn, who had ever a keen eye for beautiful colouring, gave an exclamation of delight.

"Ah, Heyworth!" said his companion, smiling, "they will never make a strait-laced Puritan of you. 'Tis, methinks, a right happy thing that a few of us insist on paying due reverence to whatsoever things are lovely. In yonder little church, when not much older than you, I was wedded to my dear wife now in heaven. Let us dismount and take this way to the Hall, 'tis not every day that you will have a chance of seeing so fine an old Norman church as this of Pyrton."

Giving the horses in charge of an attendant, they crossed the churchyard, and entering by the beautiful Norman doorway, passed into the dimly-lighted church, beneath the chancel arch of which long years before John Hampden and Elizabeth Simeon had plighted their vows. Hampden did not speak a word, but stood gazing round the familiar place as though lost in thought; musing, perhaps, over that past scene, or dwelling, maybe, on the thought which had comforted him in his great sorrow, that the son and daughter he so sorely missed were safe and at rest with their mother in the "Happy harbour of the saints."

In silence he turned away and took Joscelyn through a small gate with a curiously-contrived latch of which he understood the secret. Passing through it they found themselves in the grounds of Pyrton Hall, which sloped down towards a pretty piece of water, beyond which rose the grey walls of a picturesque Elizabethan house. In the porch Squire Simeon waited to receive them, having been told of their visit

to the church. He pressed them to sleep at the Hall, but Hampden, who had business at Watlington, would only consent to sup there, though promising, if possible, to return on the following day and spend Sunday with them. The sun had just set when they left Pyrton, and riding briskly on to Watlington they dismounted at the Hare and Hounds, at the door of which the landlord, Robert Parslow, stood talking to a group of Parliamentary officers. Colonel Sheffield stepped forward to greet Hampden.

"The military chest of which you spoke has been safely deposited in your room, sir," he said; "and if it were possible this Saturday night to give the soldiers their arrears of pay I should be right glad."

Hampden dismounted and went into the inn, followed by Sheffield and Joscelyn. The latter helped to remove the patriot's armour, after which Hampden searched his pockets for the key of the chest.

"'Tis strange!" he exclaimed. "I certainly brought it with me from Thame. Yet 'tis assuredly not here. Stay; let me think!

Where did we lie last night? 'Twas at Chinnor, and I thrust the key in my pocket-case under the bed-pillow. I must carelessly have left it there."

"Let me ride over, sir, and search for it," said Joscelyn; "Latimer is still saddled below."

"The poor beast has been far to-day, and is weary," said Hampden; "yet it is important that we have the key. I shall be greatly beholden to you, my boy, if you will ride over to Chinnor. But do not attempt to return till morning, for it will be dark by the time you get there, and we could do naught with the money to-night. Still, 'tis important that the key be found, to say nothing of my pocket-case, which contains sundry matters I shall need."

Without a moment's delay Joscelyn hurried out to the stable-yard and rode off to Chinnor. A faint glow of light still lingered in the west, and, as he rode along, the fragrance of the newly-mown hay made him think of that afternoon nearly a year ago at Katterham Court; he seemed to see

Clemency's sweet sad face as the mowers' song floated through the open casement, and she had wept to think of the changes that must have come by the next hay-harvest, and of the war and bloodshed that must lay the land desolate. An intense stillness reigned in the quiet country-side; never had the Chiltern Hills looked more peaceful than they did on that summer night, and Joscelyn, who knew that a waggon containing a large sum of money for the army was travelling down from London to Thame, congratulated himself on the calmness of the landscape. Arrived at Chinnor he found that the quarters in which they had slept on the previous night were already occupied, but the key and pocket-case had been found, and were at once handed over to him. Finding that a bed was not to be had in the village, and having with some difficulty stabled his weary horse, he wrapped himself in his cloak and shifted as best he could in a hayloft just above Latimer's stall. He was tired and slept soundly for some hours, yet it seemed to him but a short time

before he was roused by a most appalling confusion. Starting up from his bed of hay he listened in great consternation. The whole air seemed full of terrible sounds, shrieks of women, groans of men, trampling of horses, the rattle of musketry, and now and again a shouted watchword, "St. George!" or "Queen Mary!"

Springing to his feet he tore back a loose piece of boarding in the side of the loft and gazed out upon the village street. It seemed to him like looking into hell. Lurid flames leapt up from the thatched cottages, half-clothed women and children struggled madly to escape, while the Parliament soldiers, whom Hampden had vainly tried only a few hours before to save, were remorselessly butchered by the Cavaliers. For a moment Joscelyn seemed paralysed, then, catching sight of the face of the renegade, Hurry, riding past with Prince Rupert, fury seemed to restore him to life. Dashing down the ladder into the stable below he saddled Latimer in desperate haste, intent only on warning Hampden in time, in preventing a

similar surprise of Watlington. It was now about four o'clock in the morning, the sun had not yet appeared above the hills, but a vivid ruddy glow lighted the eastern sky. Joscelyn cautiously opened the door of the stable. To escape by the street was out of the question, and he thought it highly probable that the backs of the houses would be guarded. Even as this thought crossed his mind a shot fired in the very yard upon which the stable opened proved that his surmise was correct; a couple of Royalist soldiers lying in ambush had fired upon a little group of fugitives who were vainly trying to reach the fields beyond. Joscelyn, raising his musket, promptly took aim at the nearest Cavalier and avenged the slaughter of his comrades, then seeing that his sole chance of life lay in Latimer's swiftness, he urged his horse forward, bounded over the nearest hedge, and amid a shower of bullets galloped off into the meadows, by great good fortune effecting his retreat from Chinnor. Latimer, mad with excitement, galloped bravely on, and after carrying his

master across country at a pace which would not have disgraced a racehorse, landed him safely at the door of the Hare and Hounds just as Colonel Sheffield came forth, booted and spurred, ready to cheer up his men, who were mustering at the cross roads by the market-place.

"Colonel Hampden is dressing," he said. "We had news but now of Prince Rupert's doings at Postcombe."

Joscelyn ran up-stairs to see if he could help his leader, and found himself just in time to fasten his armour for him.

"Thank God you are safe," said Hampden; "I thought through my carelessness you had ridden to your death. What of Chinnor?"

"'Tis in flames, sir, and many of our poor fellows killed. Prince Rupert's force is approaching on the Icknield Way, the firing has never quite ceased, he must be skirmishing as he goes."

"We must endeavour to keep them so skirmishing till the troops come from Thame," said Hampden. "If we can but bring them to action this side of Chiselhampton Bridge,

to-day may be a turning-point in the war."

"But, sir," urged Joscelyn, "your brigade is not here; why hazard a life so precious to the country when there is no call for you to go forth?"

Hampden only smiled at his eagerness.

"You practise not what you preach, my son," he said, in his kindly voice. "Did you pause to think of the hazard when you rode alone through many perils to bring us the news from Chinnor?"

"'Tis different," cried Joscelyn, "the country could well enough spare me; but you—the leader to whom we all look—oh, sir! do not go forth!"

But even as he spoke the words he knew they would be useless; he might just as well have begged a mother to forsake a helpless babe, or a captain to desert a ship in peril.

Hampden laid a kindly hand on his shoulder.

"For what has God permitted us to be here to-day," he said, "but to volunteer in

this conflict? And what matter how long or in what fashion we serve the country, so that we serve it faithfully?"

After that there was no more to be said; they hurriedly passed through the suite of rooms, and down the steep stairs to the courtyard, where Colonel Sheffield and several of the other officers repeated the same remonstrance to Hampden to just as little purpose. He insisted on volunteering in that day's service, nor could they regret it when they saw how his presence inspired the soldiers. Passing through Watlington, the two troops commanded by Sheffield and Cross, with which Hampden and Joscelyn had volunteered, rode on in the direction of Chalgrove, a large unenclosed plain where it was deemed probable that Prince Rupert might be brought to bay. It was now about eight in the morning, much such a Sunday as they had enjoyed the previous week, clear and still with a cloudless sky, and Joscelyn could not but notice the curious contrast between the peaceful, green meadows with their winding brook, the curves of which

were outlined by pollard willows, and the warlike sounds ever growing louder and nearer as they advanced.

And now the field of Chalgrove was in sight, and, over the great expanse of standing corn waving gently in the June breeze, they could descry Prince Rupert's army, its left wing hotly engaged against those gallant dragoons, commanded by Colonel Gunter, which but yesterday Joscelyn had seen at Tetsworth. He heard his leader give a sudden ejaculation of sorrow.

"Colonel Gunter has fallen!" he said. Then, seeing that the dragoons were giving way, the new-comers hastened to rally them, and Hampden and Sheffield urged the men forward; Hampden putting himself at the head of the attack, and so stimulating the soldiers by the magic of his presence, that by the confession of their enemies they fought that day as they had never fought before.

"The main body from Thame must shortly be here," said Hampden, as they charged the enemy. Joscelyn was beside his leader in the front rank; as the words

were uttered he just glanced at him, and so contagious was Hampden's enthusiasm that at the moment all things seemed possible, even that the dilatory Essex might for once be in time. The Cavaliers vastly outnumbered them, but they were worn and weary with their night's work, and could surely be held in check till Essex came. These thoughts flashed through Joscelyn's mind as the green ears of corn bowed beneath the feet of the galloping horses, and from the troops drawn up beneath the hedge towards which they charged, there poured forth a deadly fire. He was dimly aware that their ranks were grievously thinned. Still they pressed on.

Suddenly he glanced towards his left, perceiving that Hampden's arm had fallen powerless to his side. Almost at the same moment the trooper on his right dropped down dead, and his maddened horse plunging against Latimer so terrified the poor beast that he reared violently, and his master, thrown off his guard and thinking only of his wounded leader, was thrown to

the ground, where for some time he lay stunned.

When he came to himself the skirmish was over; dizzy and confused by his fall and the kicks he had received while lying on the field, he could at first recollect nothing, but lay staring at the trampled corn, and at a sycamore tree clearly outlined against the blue sky. Moving a little he saw that the ground behind him was soaked with blood. This roused him, and starting up he found that he was the one living man among a heap of dead soldiers, and suddenly recollecting that he had seen Hampden wounded, he began with sickening anxiety to search for him among the slain. Not finding him in that part of the field he became hopeful that his hurt had not been serious, and still feeling shaken and sick he made his way over the trampled and blood-stained corn, and past the bodies of dead men and horses, longing to find some one to tell him all that had passed. Presently he came upon a few of Gunter's dragoons, who having found their master's

dead body were bearing it away with sorrowful faces, for he was an officer universally loved and esteemed.

"Have you seen Colonel Hampden?" asked Joscelyn.

"Ay, sir," said one of his men, "I saw him quit the field before the action was finished; his head was hanging down, and his arms leaning on his horse's neck."

"Then indeed he must be sorely wounded!" cried Joscelyn. "Which way did he ride?"

"Towards Pyrton, sir; yet methinks he could not have passed that way or he would have fallen in with some of Prince Rupert's men. Belike he will ride back to Thame."

"What of the enemy?" asked Joscelyn, "did they pursue our troops?"

"Nay, sir, but went on their way to Oxford as soon as they saw the main body coming in the distance. They have many prisoners with them, and among others Colonel Sheffield, who was taken grievously wounded."

Joscelyn waited no longer, for it was

plain he would only hear of further disasters; moreover, he happened to catch sight in the distance of Latimer peacefully grazing beside a hedge just as if no terrible misfortune had happened. Hastily mounting he turned to a countryman who was coming to see if he could help the wounded.

"You know these parts better than I do," said Joscelyn. "Which is the shortest way across country to Thame?"

The man indicated the direction.

"Make for Tetsworth, sir," he said, "and there you'll be on the road to Thame. Ride straight across from here by way of Hazeley Brook."

A word to the chestnut seemed to make him understand his master's desire, for he galloped on at the same desperate pace he had gone that morning from Chinnor to Watlington. Crossing Hazeley Brook, and seeing the little village of Tetsworth not far off, Joscelyn's heart leapt into his throat as he perceived riding slowly on in advance of them a solitary horseman; the sun shone on his steel corselet and on his

flowing hair; he had removed his heavy helmet, and seemed hardly able to keep in the saddle, so grievously was he wounded. In a few minutes Joscelyn was beside him, and the wounded patriot, too faint to recognise him, yet found breath for one question.

"What of the day, sir?" he asked.

"It is lost," said Joscelyn. "My Lord Essex was too late. Prince Rupert is on his way back to Oxford with many prisoners."

Hampden sighed heavily, but did not speak; his head drooped a little lower, his hands leaned more heavily on his horse's neck.

"Ah, sir!" cried Joscelyn, "how did you ever cross the brook? Do not go farther, but rest here and let me fetch help from Tetsworth."

"Why, boy, is it you?" cried Hampden, his face lighting up. "I saw you fall in the first charge, and gave you up for lost."

"I was but stunned and trampled on, sir, not wounded. But you—you are grievously hurt?"

"Ay," said Hampden, "I have got my death-wound. Yet I will ride back to Thame. This faintness came not on till I leapt the brook, and that—why, 'twas as one may say Hobson's choice, for had I dismounted to lead the horse over I could never have mounted him again."

Endless seemed that last ride, yet Hampden, though suffering tortures, spoke a few words from time to time.

"More than once in my old hunting days," he said, "have I known men as sorely hurt as I am now. Shall one grudge for one's country what men do not grudge for a pastime?"

At last they came in sight of Thame, and could hear the church bells ringing for service.

Hampden smiled faintly.

"You see," he said, "they ring us into the town though we are not victors, but vanquished."

And so he rode on over the rough highway, each moment of endurance an act of heroism. As they advanced into the place,

with its picturesque thatched houses, Hampden looked lingeringly round, in the manner of one who casts a farewell glance on scenes once familiar and dear. And when they passed the pretty old grammar school, with its mullioned windows and quaint gables, he drew his companion's attention to it.

"Over yonder," he said, "I spent my school-days. I had as lief die in that old house as anywhere else, but maybe we had better ride on to our quarters near the market-place: 'twill give less trouble to other folk."

So they passed on down the broad High Street, and amid a crowd of sorrow-stricken people dismounted at the house where Hampden had slept but a few nights before. Half fainting, he was helped from his horse and taken into a room on the ground floor, for to go a step further than was necessary was now impossible.

At first the surgeons did not despair, and Joscelyn, ever ready to hope and slow to take the gloomiest view, buoyed himself up with their words, and from his very

cheerfulness became a power in the sick-room. But Hampden knew that his days were numbered, and quietly and patiently prepared to leave his work in other hands.

Struck in the shoulder by two carbine balls, which had not only broken the bone but had entered his body, he knew that no surgeon, however skilful, could save him, and now his sole effort was to keep his mind clear that he might to the last serve his country. Though suffering tortures he insisted on dictating letters of counsel to the Parliament, and last words to some of his kinsfolk and friends, and Joscelyn, to whose lot it usually fell to write for him, marvelled at his perfect self-forgetfulness.

On the Thursday there were times when he suffered so terribly that he could do nothing but lie in that pathetic heroism of silent endurance which to the watchers seemed more moving than cries or groans. Once in a quiet interval he looked up at Joscelyn, whose hands he had gripped fast in his agony.

"Boy," he said, faintly, "methinks I had

somewhat to do in leading you into this strife. I trust you may never regret it."

"Nay, sir, I must ever bless you for your guiding," said Joscelyn, with a look so full of affection and confidence that it brought tears to the eyes of more than one present.

"I pray God you may never know such pain," said Hampden, wearily.

This was practically the only allusion he ever made to his cruel sufferings, save in response to direct questions. As it had been all through his life, so in these last days he showed most markedly that power of self-effacement, that utter merging of self in the thought of the country's need, which was his strongest characteristic. All the cheerful courtesy, too, which had distinguished him, shone out now in little gracious habits of speech to those who waited on him, while his tenderness for his children and for the wife so recently married was manifested in countless ways.

After the age-long agony of that Thursday Joscelyn began to realise that the end was near. The Lady Letitia, worn with watching,

was prevailed upon to rest, and he was allowed to keep watch with one of the surgeons in the sick-room through the night hours, in company with Arthur Goodwin, Hampden's closest friend and colleague in Parliament.

The dying patriot had some intervals of broken sleep, in which they often heard him praying most fervently for the country, for the Parliament, for his children, and many times that the King might be delivered from his evil advisers. When the next day dawned he looked towards Joscelyn.

"Will you and Latimer take one more ride for me?" he said. "It was arranged that my mother should come in the coach from home this day. I should be grateful if you would ask the Rector to come also, and let him bring the chalice with him, for I would fain receive the sacrament for the last time."

Returning from this duty about noon on the 23rd, Joscelyn found his leader much weaker but in less pain. Indeed, throughout the afternoon Hampden was in such

comparative ease that he was able to have long interviews with his mother, and with his wife and children. Joscelyn for the most part was in the outer room, desperately holding his sorrow at arm's length lest it should overwhelm him, restlessly going on errands which any of the servants would have undertaken, talking with Sir Robert Pye, who had that day come down with his wife from London, or listening to the conversation between Dr. Spurstow, the chaplain of Hampden's regiment, and Mr. Robert Lenthall, the new rector of Great Hampden. Late in the evening the Lady Letitia opened the door of the sick-room and beckoned to him.

"Captain Heyworth," she said, "my husband would greatly like you to be present with us, and will you tell the Rector that the service had best take place at once!"

Her wonderful self-command amazed Joscelyn, who, thinking of her brief happiness and of her devotion to her husband, lost sight for the time of his own sorrow.

Yet, after all, was it not almost enough joy to fall to the lot of any mortal to have inspired in the heart of a man like Hampden such love and trust that, on his death-bed, all anxiety for his orphaned children could be laid aside, so well assured was he that she would treat them precisely as though they were her own?

The room was somewhat dimly lighted, and as they entered Joscelyn heard Hampden's voice, and noticed how much weaker it had grown. "Let him stay," he was saying; "the child wishes it, and methinks thou art old enough to understand, Dick?"

"Yes, sir," said little Richard, whose fair head nestled close to his father's. The contrast between the rosy-cheeked boy and the pale, sunken features of the dying man was very strange, and was all the more marked because the childish face was so full of sorrow, so clouded by misery, while the father's face seemed already to have gained something of that peace, "the true end of war," about which he had spoken as they

rode from London. There were present besides the Rector, Dr. Spurstow, old Madam Hampden, the Lady Letitia, little Richard —Hampden's eldest surviving son — his daughter Anne, Sir Robert Pye, and Arthur Goodwin. At first Joscelyn could only feel like one in a terrible dream. His eyes wandered from one to another in the sorrowful group, and he saw with a sort of dull pang how the flickering candlelight glanced on the bright steel armour, leaning now against the dark wainscot, and never again to be worn by Hampden. Collect and Epistle had fallen unheeded upon his ear: only the last words of the brief Gospel arrested him—"But is passed from death into life." Then once more he looked towards the dying man, and something in the simplicity of his quiet and unaffected devotion raised him into another atmosphere, and within his troubled heart life and strength faced death and sorrow and triumphed.

Afterwards, having embraced little Richard, Hampden motioned to Joscelyn to draw nearer and receive his last farewell.

"God bless you," he said, faintly. "Be a friend to my boy. I pray that you and Clemency may long be spared to serve the good cause."

For the last time Joscelyn looked into those deep, earnest eyes. Then he put his arm round the sobbing child, and at old Madam Hampden's suggestion led him out of the room, and only left him when, worn out with sorrow, Richard fell asleep in one of the upper rooms. As he came down-stairs once more he met Arthur Goodwin in the passage. The tears were raining down the strong man's face, but he struggled hard for composure.

"I think he will not speak again," he said, in a broken voice. "He is now as it were in a sleep. Yet if there should be a return to consciousness I pray you to let me know."

Joscelyn promised to do so, but the long hours of the night wore on, and only an ominous stillness reigned in the sick-room. At last, about five o'clock in the morning of the 24th, a sound of galloping feet was heard

in the High Street. Joscelyn, who was in the outer room with Dr. Spurstow, the chaplain, went to the window to see what visitor came at this early hour.

"'Tis Dr. Giles, of Chinnor, an old friend of Colonel Hampden's," said Dr. Spurstow. "He comes too late."

They went to the door to receive the traveller, a burly, pleasant-looking country parson.

"I bear a message of inquiry from the King," he said: "his Majesty bade me offer his surgeon to Mr. Hampden."

"The offer comes too late, sir," said Joscelyn.

"Ay," said Dr. Spurstow, "he lies at the point of death."

The visitor was much overcome, but asked to see Hampden; and Joscelyn, having borne the news of his arrival to the Lady Letitia, ushered him into the sick-room. Dr. Giles, giving hurried greetings to the watchers, bent over his old friend and tried to rouse him by repeating the King's words. But it was too late. The sound of the voice dis-

turbed the dying patriot a little, a tremor ran through his powerful frame, his pale lips moved as though forming words which yet were never uttered. Had he perchance heard the message, and with a last effort of his habitual courtesy did he return his thanks? Or did he try to breathe forth one of those pathetic and oft-repeated cries to God to save England from those who threatened her ancient liberties? No one would ever know. For the farewell he had spoken to Arthur Goodwin proved to be his last utterance in this world.

A few minutes later, sleeping as calmly as a tired child, John Hampden "passed from death into life."

CHAPTER XII.

The spirit of bitterness may wind itself into our souls, even while we are making the loudest professions of charity.—Dean Plumptre.

Stunned and dazed, not as yet feeling very acutely, Joscelyn passed from the death-bed of his leader and friend into the High Street, where but few people were stirring. He went straight to Arthur Goodwin's quarters to bear him the news, only pausing once when a great brawny-armed smith, catching sight of him, flung down his hammer on the anvil and ran out from his forge with an eager question.

"What news of Mr. Hampden, sir?"

"All is over," said Joscelyn, in a numb voice.

But even as he uttered the words he

felt how false they were, and watching the blacksmith's passionate outburst of grief, he realised that Hampden's work on this earth was not over—was, in truth, only just beginning—and that for all time his name would serve as inspiration and example to those who sought righteousness, freedom, and progress.

There was no need to speak the actual news to Colonel Goodwin; he saw it written plainly enough in the young officer's face, and, touched by sorrow so deep and genuine, he put his arm within Joscelyn's and walked back with him to see if he could help Sir Robert Pye in making the necessary arrangements for the funeral.

"Every honest man hath a share in this loss, and therefore will likewise share in our sorrow," he said; "and truly God takes away the best amongst us. Take it all, I think he was not to any man living second. Did he speak again?"

"Nay, sir; I believe his last conversation was with you. Just at the last Dr. Giles tried to rouse him from the sleep in which

for six hours he had lain; the King had sent to offer his surgeon from Oxford. But, like the troops at Chalgrove, the help came too late."

"The King sent, say you? What does that bode, I wonder?" said Goodwin. "Only at the beginning of this month his Majesty was taking part in a plot by which Pym and Hampden were to be treacherously seized at night in their beds. Having failed in that, did he think to conciliate the most powerful man of the day? If so, it shows how little he understood the character of our dead leader."

"May not his Majesty have sent the message out of pure humanity?" said Joscelyn.

Arthur Goodwin was silent; personally he had small reason to believe in the King's kind-heartedness, being one of the two who were specially excepted by Charles in the general pardon he offered to the county of Buckingham, but he would not urge anything against the more generous thought of his young companion, and indeed at that

moment they reached the house and encountered Sir Robert Pye.

It was deemed best that the funeral should take place on the next day; for in time of war there was no possibility of observing the usual tedious formalities. Moreover, the family were already in deep mourning for Mrs. Knightley. When these details had been settled, Joscelyn was despatched to Hampden House with a message, and in fact the whole of that day he was so continuously employed that he was able to hold in check the sorrow which he yet all the time knew would sooner or later overwhelm him.

The 25th of June, unlike the previous Sunday when they had fought under a cloudless sky at Chalgrove, was sultry and oppressive; a sort of blight seemed to hang over the place, not a breath of air was stirring, and in the distance, from time to time, could be heard prolonged, rumbling thunder, as though away among the Chilterns some battle raged.

Joscelyn, whose rest during the past

week had been of the briefest, slept late that morning, and was only roused by the tolling of the great bell in the tower of the church. Hastily dressing, he went down to the death-chamber to see if in any way he could be of service.

There was nothing for him to do. All the preparations were complete; the hastily-made and unpretentious coffin was closed, the blue banner of the Parliament had been thrown across it, and upon the lid had been placed the patriot's sword and helmet.

He stood for a moment with bent head in that awful, silent blankness; then, beginning faintly to realise the irreparable loss their cause had sustained, he turned away with heaving breast and dim eyes, unable to endure the oppression of his surroundings. At the back of the house a long strip of garden ground led down to the meadows; here he paced to and fro, struggling to bear up under that crushing load of sorrow, under that great national loss which only became more appalling as it was more fully

understood. All the customary platitudes of comfort were powerless to touch his heart now; he could only think of the great statesman cut off in his prime, of that mighty influence for good removed from Parliament, of the gallant leader—whom so many had longed to see at the head of the army—betrayed to his death by a mercenary time-server like Hurry.

As he paced beside the homely fruit trees and currant bushes, and past the strawberry beds whose heavy fragrance filled the air, the solemn tolling of the great bell in Thame tower ceased, and the bells began to ring a muffled peal. Then he knew that he must return to the house, and joining the other mourners, he took his place in the long, sad procession which followed the body of John Hampden to the grave. Borne by his brave green-coats down the broad street of Thame, along the country road he had so often travelled in life, amid the tears of all beholders, that simple pathetic funeral train passed on. When they reached Hampden House the soldiers

bore the coffin through the old banqueting-hall to the brick parlour where Hampden had in past times so often toiled, and where years before he had been summoned for his refusal to pay the ship-money. Here, while the soldiers dined in the hall, the women of the family gathered to take in private their last silent farewell of the dead. Joscelyn being presently summoned to speak with old Madam Hampden, found them still weeping round the coffin, and Hampden's mother, seeing how greatly he was moved, drew him a little aside, and, laying her hand on his arm, spoke to him with almost motherly tenderness.

"I know how well you loved him," she said, "and how great an affection he had for you. They tell me you must leave for London this very day. Is that indeed the case?"

"My leave has nearly expired, madam," explained Joscelyn, "and as it is necessary that I see Sir Robert Neal on my way to the west, I must not delay any longer."

"They told me you would probably lie at

Katterham for a night," said Madam Hampden, "and I thought you would kindly bear this little token to Sir Robert. 'Tis a small volume of Plato which my dear son valued and constantly read. Here, too, is one of his seals for your promised wife; they tell me ladies now set great store by seals, and I know Clemency will like some remembrance of him. And as for you, Captain Heyworth—you who have been so great a comfort to us all through this sad week—if you care to have it, I should like to give you the Bible he carried through this campaign."

It was a tiny volume with gilt edges, one of those "pocket Bibles" which excited the special derision of the Cavaliers, and which—only lately issued—were used by vast numbers of the Parliamentary officers.

As Joscelyn took it with warm and grateful thanks, there flashed through his mind many a strange camp-scene in which he had seen that little volume in the hand of his lost leader. Bidding a sad farewell to the daughters of the house and to the noble-

hearted Lady Letitia, he returned to the hall, where once more the mournful procession formed, and the walls of the old house rang and echoed as the soldiers' voices rose in a great reassuring burst of song, the metrical version of the 90th Psalm.

A fortnight before they had spent that happy Sunday together, with Hampden as the life of the party; now, as Joscelyn glanced back, he saw the broken-hearted wife, the mother, the poor weeping girls, watching at the far end of the hall, while, in advance, the soldiers bore the body of their Colonel to its last resting-place, and the sad-hearted little heir—not yet twelve years old—walked behind, holding fast to Sir Robert Pye's hand, and bravely struggling to keep back his tears.

With arms reversed, they marched through the quiet park to the churchyard gate, where the Rector met them with the words of good cheer spoken ages ago at Bethany, and passing into the church the soldiers laid the body of John Hampden beside the tombs of his forefathers in the chancel, near

the touchingly-worded memorial which he had dedicated to his dead wife. It seemed as if that whole congregation—and they were but the representatives of thousands of absent mourners—took most literally the beautiful phrase in the burial service—"Our dear brother here departed." The dead statesman who for two-and-twenty years had toiled for them and their rights in Parliament; the champion of truth and righteousness, who alone and single-handed had fought a tyrannical king and seven servile judges, enduring imprisonment, obloquy, and slander; the soldier with his matchless courage, his rare modesty, his devotion to the country, had been, in spite of his great wealth and ancient pedigree, simply and literally their brother, more fully in sympathy with them than any other man of that time.

Joscelyn had made his farewells at the house and did not again return to it; he ordered Latimer to be saddled, and when the crowd had dispersed to see the soldiers return, he once more entered the church,

and passing into the deserted chancel, knelt beside the open grave.

Then at last the floodgates of his grief were opened; with choking sobs that shook his whole frame he fell forward on the stone slab which before long would cover Hampden's tomb, weeping the most bitter tears of his whole life.

Presently a sound of footsteps in the porch made him spring to his feet, and, with an effort, drive back those signs of grief which no Heyworth quite forgave himself for showing before others.

The sexton and his assistants had come to finish their work. Joscelyn with bowed head hurried past them, made his way to the stables, mounted his horse, and rode away from the place which must for ever be bound up with his most precious memories.

A summer shower was something of a relief to him, and by and by the sun shone out for the first time that day. He paused for a minute to look back at the lovely landscape with its verdant hills and

wooded valleys, and saw in the distance the Whiteleaf Cross, commemorating an old Saxon victory over Danish invaders, clearly marked on the hill-side, while resting over it was the upward spring of the arch of a brilliant rainbow.

The sight cheered his heavy heart. Hope springing from self-sacrifice, light from cruel loss, the world's greater gain from the living of a noble, manly life! Were not these undying realities? Vaguely he had known it all long ago, but through the life and death of Hampden the truths had gained for him new force and meaning.

Riding that night as long as the light served him, he slept at one of the comfortable roadside inns, at that time much more plentiful, and very early the next morning resumed his journey to London. He found the whole place in mourning over the news of Hampden's death, while intense bitterness had been stirred up by the rancorous attacks made upon him by the Royalists. The one which perhaps angered Joscelyn the most was the attack in the *Mercurius*

Aulicus, published, on the very day of Hampden's death, at Oxford. It raked up again that strange farrago of mingled truth and falsehood with regard to Hampden's private sorrows which had wounded the bereaved father's heart, at a time when one might have expected even a fiend to hold his peace. Many of the nobler spirits among the King's followers, such as Falkland and Hopton and Chillingworth, preserved a reverent silence, and doubtless mourned the loss of a noble enemy. But the servile court liars gathered about the grave of the dead man like ghouls, and disgraced themselves by promulgating the vilest personalities of party warfare.

Joscelyn, young and hot-headed, was affected very grievously by these attacks on his dead leader. An older man might have borne them with greater philosophy, and have treated them with the calm disdain they deserved. But he was lacking in the faculty of disdain, and as he rode down to Katterham there was a hard, bitter look on his face which had never been there before.

Sir Robert Neal was quick to note the change in him and to understand its cause. When he had heard the details of his friend's death he turned the subject quietly, and began to talk of Clemency and of the future, alluding to the marriage-contract which had been signed in London.

"These are but ill days," he said, "for marrying and giving in marriage. But I am an old man and growing feeble, and I should like to see Clemency your wife before I die."

They then spoke of the journey which Clemency had to make from Gloucester, and of its difficulties and perils, arranging that, if any break in the war should come and hostilities be for a time suspended, it might be advisable for the marriage to take place from Christopher Bennett's house, so that Joscelyn should himself be able to escort his bride to Katterham.

But, alas! any cessation of the strife seemed then but little likely. The prospects of the Parliamentary party became day by day darker; Pym was in failing health,

Essex was torpid and timorous, troops from the north were hastening to join the King at Oxford, London itself was threatened, from the west came news of Royalist triumphs—and Hampden was dead.

Small wonder that, as Joscelyn journeyed down to Somersetshire, the iron entered into his soul when he mused on the rejoicings of the Cavaliers over the loss that had well-nigh broken his heart. Small wonder that he thought of the King with something like loathing when he pictured him as rewarding the deserter Hurry with the honour of knighthood for his services at Chalgrove—Hurry the renegade, once a comrade of Hampden's, yet not ashamed to spend the very Sunday of his burial in attacking and plundering the Parliamentary quarters at Wycombe, slaughtering some of the same troops he had once led.

It was in this sore-hearted and bitter state that he arrived, on the evening of the 1st July, at the village of North Cadbury, in Somersetshire, and having been directed by a shepherd-boy to the parsonage, rode

up to the door just as the sun was setting. Whichcote and his young bride had been walking in the garden, and seeing the unexpected guest dismount, hastened forward to receive him, though for a minute the tutor failed to recognise his former pupil in this stern-faced officer with his compressed, bitter-looking mouth and sorrowful eyes. But Joscelyn, seeing his master's broad-browed and most winning face once more, and recalling at the sight his happy life at Cambridge, forgot for a moment his grief, and with kindling eyes and all his old warmth of manner hastened forward with eager greetings.

"Forgive me, sir, for coming in this unceremonious fashion," he said, "but I am on my way to join Sir William Waller, who I learn is now at Bath, and being commissioned to bear you a watch bequeathed to you by Mr. Gainsborough, of Lincoln, I thought I had best deliver it in person."

Whichcote gave him a most cordial greeting and introduced him to his wife.

"I scarcely knew you for the moment,"

he said, apologetically; "and, indeed, had thought you were travelling abroad; but I see you have elected to stay and play your part in this troubled land of ours."

No word in relation to politics had ever before passed between them—it had been a subject which Joscelyn in his Cambridge days had carefully avoided. Nor had he ever regarded Whichcote as a Puritan, though he had lately learnt that he was one of the most broad-minded supporters of the cause.

Whichcote walked with him to the stable, Joscelyn preferring to see to his favourite horse himself, and explaining how much he valued him.

"He was with me at Chalgrove Field," he said, "and during Colonel Hampden's last ride back to Thame."

"You knew Colonel Hampden, then?" said Whichcote. "That was indeed a better training for you than months of travel in Europe. Truly all England mourns when such an one dies."

Then, seeing the spasm of pain which

passed over the young man's face, Whichcote quietly changed the subject, and led him back to the parsonage, where, though all was simple and unostentatious, there was nevertheless the dainty freshness and the careful arrangement which characterises the first home of a happily-wedded pair. After supper he took him into the little room which served for his study, and sitting there by the open window in the fading light, they talked together of all that had passed since their parting a year ago. It was indeed hard to realise that it was but a year, for Joscelyn had leapt from careless boyhood into manhood laden with care, while his natural hopefulness, which had carried him through so many troubles, seemed in the great shock of Hampden's death to have been crushed out of him.

Whichcote was quick to note that he sought refuge in bitter words against the King and his party, not so much from any deeply-ingrained hatred as in the desperate attempt to relieve the overwhelming blankness of loss which all who had looked to

Hampden as their champion and defender were now experiencing. He just let him pour out all his wrath and grief, and then began in his quiet, finely-modulated voice to attempt some sort of reply.

"I am apt to think, Captain Heyworth," he said, throwing the casement window a little wider open as he spoke, "that many who have been exasperated one against another, are far nearer to one another in sense than in words. In respect of God, who seeth hearts, they agree more than in the view of the world, which only sees outward expressions. I believe, for one real difference in matters of consequence between persons considerable, there are twenty mistakes of meanings; and could they see one another's hearts they would think better of one another."

"Would you then, sir, wholly excuse these vile slanderers?" said Joscelyn, the fierce light in his eyes still unsubdued.

"Whosoever scornfully uses any other man," said Whichcote, "disparages himself the human nature. Opposites too often

study to represent each other in the worst sense. Let us honestly endeavour to take our foes at their best; for every man at his best will be found good for something."

"What!" cried Joscelyn, "a traitor such as Hurry? You cannot realise, sir, what he is, how vicious his life, how altogether without sense of honour, so that even the Cavaliers—whom God knows are not over particular—were shy of putting their confidence in such an one. I can well understand that a man may honourably change his views, but Hurry was so vile as to carry information to Oxford of the large sum of money being sent from London to the Lord-General at Thame, and 'twas in hopes of taking this prize that the expedition ending in the fight at Chalgrove was first set on foot."

"I had not heard that," said Whichcote. "Few details reach us here in the country. Did Prince Rupert seize the money?"

"No, sir; by good fortune he missed it, for the burning of Chinnor and the noise of the fray warned the drivers of the waggons, and they turned aside into the woods, wait-

ing till the Cavaliers had passed by. Little was gained to the King by the expedition save a few prisoners and the death-wound of Colonel Hampden. 'Tis for this last, clearly, that the King hath knighted that vile renegade."

With difficulty he strangled a curse out of deference to his host, and pushing back his chair began to pace to and fro with what Sir John Denham would have termed his "bull-in-the-net" expression.

Whichcote, whose personal life happened at this time to be specially bright, was greatly moved by his companion's troubles. Himself still comparatively young, for he was at this time only four-and-thirty, he was able to understand Joscelyn's state of mind much better than an older man might have done.

"I have often thought of late," he said, "that both joy and grief are things of great hazard and danger in the life of man. The one breaks the heart, the other intoxicates the head. An eye to God in both doth poise and balance."

Joscelyn left off pacing to and fro. The words arrested him; he came and stood by the open window looking out into the summer twilight, a calm like that of the dewy garden stealing over his troubled heart as he listened to his companion's words.

"The state of religion," continued Whichcote, quietly, "seems to me to consist in a divine frame and temper of mind; and shows itself in a life and actions conformable to the Divine will. Religion is not a hearsay, a presumption, a supposition; is not a customary profession, is not an affectation of any mode, is not a piety of particular fancy, consisting in some pathetic devotions, vehement expressions, bodily severities, affected anomalies, and aversions from the innocent ways of others; but consisteth in a profound humility and an universal charity."

"Universal, sir?" questioned Joscelyn, who had many of the qualities which go to make a good hater.

"Ay," said Whichcote, smiling a little at

his expression of face, "universal. And remember that God imposeth no law of righteousness upon us which He doth not observe Himself. Too often men have an itch rather to make religion than to use it; but we are to use our religion, not to make it."

Joscelyn sighed. "Your standard, sir, seems to me altogether too high for one who has to live in the world now-a-days. The ideal is a noble one, but how should a man compass it? how learn to love the base, the loveless, the oppressors?"

"I know only of this way," said Whichcote, his eyes looking far beyond the dim garden, as though reading the secrets of another world. "We must learn of the Divine wisdom, imitate the Divine goodness, depend on the Divine power."

The words never left Joscelyn's memory, and he carried all through his life the recollection of the quiet Sunday that followed, and of the sermon that he heard Whichcote preach in North Cadbury church, on the thirty-first and thirty-second verses of the

fourth chapter of the Letter to the Ephesians. Always he could hear the preacher's clear voice pleading for the discharge from the heart of all ill-will and displeasure against others, and of that false zeal which degenerates into passion and interest, and is wholly unlike the Divine goodness, kindness, and clemency which it is our duty to imitate. The word "clemency" for a time distracted Joscelyn. He missed a good deal that followed, and wandered off in thought to the gabled house at Gloucester.

When he returned to the present the speaker was saying that differences of opinion must exist, for men must think as they found cause, and no man was master of his own apprehensions. Therefore, urged Whichcote, we must dwell on those points on which we do agree, and make allowance for the different tempers of men. Some men's apprehensions could not possibly hit in anything. They were cast in different moulds, and could no more help this than they could make their faces alike. But anger, ill-will, and displeasure disqualified

the mind from the pursuit of truth; and the choicest piece of charity was to make fair interpretation and to put a candid construction on men's actions. He would fain engage men to humanity, courtesy, and universal charity, so as, if it were possible, to promote a general reconciliation in the whole creation of God. Finally he claimed freedom in all points save only in this—that men are not at liberty to judge one another; and with one more strong appeal to his hearers to strive after a godlike frame and temper of mind, he brought to a close the most striking sermon that Joscelyn could ever remember hearing.

CHAPTER XIII.

They have seemed to be together, though absent; shook hands, as over a vast; and embraced as it were from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their loves!—*Winter's Tale*, Act i., Sc. 1.

Early on the Monday, Joscelyn left the quiet of the country parsonage, and before many hours had passed found himself once more in the midst of the strife. Not without considerable risk he succeeded in making his way alone through a country infested by the enemy, and contrived to join the main body of Waller's army, which had taken up a position just below Claverton Down, guarding Bath against the threatened approach of the Royalists from Bradford-on-Avon. The lovely little village of Claverton presented a strange scene; the beautiful old hall had been converted into a temporary garrison,

the river had been spanned by a hastily-erected bridge, and a redoubt had been thrown up to defend it. Pausing at a little distance, Joscelyn watched the safe transit of two cannon and of a detachment of steel-capped soldiers across the Avon. The sight of those tawny orange scarves all massed together, and of the familiar blue banner of the Parliament, stirred his heart strangely. Hampden was dead, but the good cause remained, the cause which the patriot's dying lips had bade him serve. His old buoyant hopefulness returned to him, and his face was full of its wonted cheerfulness as he greeted his chief. Sir William Waller had been directing matters at the passage of the river; at sight of his favourite officer his black eyes lighted up with a gleam of pleasure, and he gave him a most hearty welcome.

"I have missed you sorely," he said, "and you are returned just in time for the fray, if I mistake not. The enemy is endeavouring to reach Bath by this valley of the Avon, by far the easiest approach. We

shall frustrate their plans here, I trust, and drive them to attack it on the northern side, where they will find it no easy task to oust us from the heights of Lansdown. In the meantime let us feed while we may; you were ever good at catering."

In truth Joscelyn's handsome face and courteous bearing stood him in very good stead, and even where the country-folk were hostile to the Parliament he could generally obtain better provisions by a simple request than others by threats and commands. Here in East Somersetshire, moreover, the people were entirely devoted to the Parliament, and Claverton was ready enough to furnish Waller and his men with all that they needed. Waller, who was as temperate and simple in his tastes as Hampden himself, rested for a while under the shade of a great elm, watching the movements of his lieutenant, Major Dowet, over on the opposite side of the river upon Monkton Farleigh Down. From time to time he questioned Joscelyn as to the details of the skirmish on Chalgrove Field and the last days of

Hampden, and told him what had passed during his absence.

"I greatly wished you had been with me after the fight at Chewton Mendip," he said, "for Sir Ralph Hopton, being anxious to meet me in a private interview, sent a very courteous and friendly letter making the request, and chose as his ambassador one of your brothers."

"Do you know, sir, which of them came?" said Joscelyn, eagerly.

"I heard not his name, merely that he was Captain Heyworth, upon which for a moment I had hoped 'twas you yourself returned; but there was shown into my room a young man of about your age, or maybe younger, and looking somewhat as you might, with darker hair, skin, and eyes—a very pleasant-mannered, well-bred youth he seemed, and grievously disappointed by your absence."

"Then it was Dick," said Joscelyn, with keen regret at having missed him. "And did you, sir, have the interview with Sir Ralph Hopton?"

"No," said Waller, "much as I should have liked to meet my old friend; but I well knew that we were both of us entirely true to the cause we each serve, and incapable of being wrought upon by any persuasions. Moreover, the conference could never have been so close between us but that it would take wind and receive a construction to my dishonour. May God in His good time send us the blessing of peace, and in the meantime fit us to receive it; then shall many friendly foes be restored to one another's society. Your brother, by the bye, left with me a letter which you shall have to-night when we return to our quarters at Bath. 'Tis a cruel fate that has severed two kinsmen thus strongly attached to one another."

Through the hours of skirmishing that followed Joscelyn felt very bitterly the truth of Waller's last words, and as the sound of firing and the clash of steel rang through the wooded valley his thoughts kept returning to Dick, till only by the most painful effort could he drag them back to his own

duties. It appeared that a detachment sent forward by Major Dowet to occupy a wood on the road to Bradford by which the Royalists were advancing had, after an hour's engagement, been utterly routed, and Waller's forces were compelled before long to evacuate Claverton and to retire towards Bath. The Royalists did not, however, venture to attempt the city from the side on which it was so well guarded, but, as Waller had predicted, resolved to attack Bath on the northern side, and took up their quarters at Marshfield.

It was not till the night of the 4th July that Joscelyn received the letter which he so greatly longed for. Then, as Waller retired to his quarters in Bath, at the Nag's Head, in Northgate Street, for a few hours' sleep, he handed him the following lines which Dick had hastily penned—

"Dear Joscelyn—

"I am sorely disappointed that you are still absent, having counted much on getting speech with you. Yet it is perhaps

well that you are not with Sir W. Waller, as we stand less risk of causing each other's death in this detestable strife. My father got a slight wound in a skirmish the other day, and will rest some two or three weeks at Wells. Otherwise all goes right, save that Jervis agrees but ill with Sir Ralph Hopton, and I doubt his being able to continue much longer with him. Sir Ralph is not unlike your commander, all for mercy and forbearance and courtesy betwixt foes, and the temper of men like Prince Maurice and Jervis and some others one could name is insufferable to him. The news from Shortell is good. Isabel safely married to that fop, Toby Blount, and Rosamond recovered of her sickness. Forget not if, as seems likely, you Parliamentarians find yourselves shortly overcome and in peril of your lives, that there is at least one Royalist ready to move heaven and earth to preserve you from the consequences of this strife."

Folding the letter with a sigh, Joscelyn vainly tried to sleep. It was already past

midnight, and he lay listening to the footsteps of the sentries and to the hoarse voice of the watchman proclaiming the hour, till at last the dawn broke, and with a heavy heart he rose to take his part in that day's work.

As they left the hostelry and passed into Northgate Street the whole city seemed shrouded in mist, so that he could only dimly descry the great tower of the abbey. But as they mounted the long hill of Lansdown they gradually emerged into a clearer air, and, pausing for a brief rest at the brow of the hill before traversing the level length of the ridge, Joscelyn looked back with wonder upon the strangely weird effect of the valley mist. It seemed as if a beautiful, calm lake filled the gorge, while the wooded tops of the hills fringed the shore; in the exquisite stillness of early morning the scene was full of a most heavenly peace. Who would have thought that beneath that magical mist-lake lay hundreds of anxious hearts, and the homes of that city in whose defence he was about to fight?

Marching along to the farther end of the Lansdown ridge, Waller's army took up a strong position just at the brow of the hill, and here breastworks of earth and faggots were hastily thrown up and the cannon planted. Then followed a weary time of waiting; the Royalist troops were plainly to be seen over on Tog Hill, but they hesitated to attack Waller's splendid position, and finding that he awaited their advance they began to retire. This was more than the Conqueror could patiently put up with. It was imperatively necessary that he should prevent the Royalists from joining the King's other army at Oxford, and he gave the order for the whole of his cavalry to pursue the retreating enemy, while the infantry still guarded the heights of Lansdown. In a few minutes a noble party of horsemen were streaming down the hill, foremost among them being the new regiment formed in May by Sir Arthur Hazlerigg during his visit to London. These men, thoroughly encased in armour, received the nickname of the "Lobsters,"

and struck such terror into the hearts of the Cavaliers that for a time they carried all before them, and with the greatest difficulty Hopton and his officers induced their men to charge them. After a severe conflict, however, the Parliamentarians, being greatly outnumbered, were forced to retreat, and many of the poor "Lobsters" found that their new armour was not an unmixed benefit, for if they were once unhorsed it was so heavy that they could scarcely mount again. After this the Royalists advanced boldly, the Cornishmen of Prince Maurice's army being specially eager to attack the Hill of Lansdown.

Veterans who had been present during the wars in France declared that never had they seen such fighting as they saw that day. Again and again the Parliamentarians charged down the hill, but still the valiant Royalists advanced. On either side the slaughter was terrible, and Joscelyn, as he returned from delivering a message to the musketeers stationed in a little wood to Waller's right, found the grass strewn

with the dead and wounded. Thinking of Dick his heart sickened within him; he looked away from the bloodstained turf and the ghastly scenes surrounding him to where, far away in the distance, the sun bathed the peaceful landscape in light, and touched the waters of the Bristol Channel into a vivid streak of dazzling silver. The contrast stirred up in him a wild, unreasoning revolt; Nature, it seemed to him, should not at that moment have looked so calm.

Urging Latimer forward he galloped towards his comrades, who were retiring up the hill again to face the next charge, when, with a shock of horror, he perceived, lying almost beneath his horse's feet, the face that had persistently haunted him all through the long hours of the battle—Dick's face—ghastly pale, the eyes full of a dreadful dumb agony. In an instant he had reined back Latimer and dismounted.

"Oh! is it you?" cried Dick, his face lighting up with a look of intense relief.

"Where are you wounded?" asked Joscelyn, breathing hard.

"A ball here in the thigh. Don't linger: Sir Bevil Granville will charge."

"What!" exclaimed Joscelyn, "am I to leave you to be trampled to death? Nay, I will set you on my horse. I can hold you in the saddle, never fear."

And suiting the action to the words he lifted Dick in his strong arms and with some difficulty contrived to place him on Latimer's back, holding him firmly with his right arm and, himself on foot, urging the chestnut to mount the hill. It was indeed a desperate attempt. Between two fires they pressed on, the burning rays of the July sun beating down upon them, the way growing more and more steep, and the fierce Cornishmen gaining upon them at every step. Dick had entirely lost consciousness, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Joscelyn could support him, but Latimer seemed to understand from his master's voice what great things were expected of him, and he struggled up

bravely. They had almost gained the brow of the hill, and for greater speed were making a cut across the turf, when, warned by the near approach of trampling feet and the half-unintelligible war-cries shouted by hundreds of lusty voices, Joscelyn glanced over his right shoulder. To his dismay he found that the Cornishmen were close upon them ; the hillside bristled with the ascending pikes.

"On, Latimer, on!" he cried, in a tone that made the noble charger bound forward. They were within a hundred yards of safety. He was straining every nerve to keep his brother still in the saddle, when suddenly a terrible thrust, just behind the upstretched arm that grasped Dick, utterly disabled him. A pike had run him clean through the body. As he fell to the ground it was wrenched out again. There followed two minutes of mortal agony while the fierce Cornish pikemen surged over him. Then for a time he lost consciousness.

What followed seemed like some horrible dream. He struggled back to life again,

heard the roar of battle, tried to shift his position, and sank back fainting. Again he came to himself, only to find a deadly struggle going on close at hand, and to suffer torture as once more he was trampled under the feet of the combatants. When he next opened his eyes and raised his head a little from the bloodstained turf the sky was crimson with the sunset glow, the firing was fitful and seemed farther off, and close by he heard the sound of horsemen advancing and of cannon being dragged up the steep ascent. It flashed through his mind that Waller must have been driven from his position, and once more he tried to raise himself and see what was passing, but again faintness overwhelmed him.

By the time he recovered his senses, the summer twilight was fast deepening into night, and the battle seemed practically over, though at long intervals the dull roar of cannon echoed among the hills. And now, as full recollection came back to him, Joscelyn was seized with a terrible longing

to know what Dick's fate had been. It was scarcely likely that he would have kept in the saddle: he was probably lying within a few yards of him either dying or dead. Raising himself by slow and painful inches, he looked up the dusky hillside, strewn with the dead and wounded.

Where in all this terrible gathering was Dick?

A prostrate form lying about two or three yards above him stirred a little just then and groaned heavily. A great hope dawned in Joscelyn's heart. With an effort, which cost him terrible agony, he crawled on his knees up the steep slope, and in the dim light could just discern Dick's familiar face.

The boy did not recognise him, but only moaned piteously and begged for something to drink, repeating the request over and over again, as if the torturing thirst overpowered every other feeling. Now Joscelyn had in his wallet a small flask of sack; this he contrived, not without great pain and difficulty, to hold to Dick's parched lips,

and the poor fellow, catching at it eagerly, drained it to the last drop. After some time this seemed to revive him; straining his eyes to pierce the gloom, he made a sudden exclamation of relief.

"Is it you, Joscelyn? Ay, now I remember—you tried to save me."

"And made but a bungling piece of work of it," said Joscelyn, faintly.

"You are wounded!" cried Dick, shocked at the change in his voice. "You were wounded through helping me! Where is that flask? Did you let me take all—all—when your need was as great?"

"I need nothing now that I have found you," said Joscelyn. But the words seemed to die away from his lips, and Dick in dreadful self-reproach bent over him, shuddering at the deathly cold of his face and hands.

"I knew not what I did," he said. "Since Sunday we have none of us had more than a biscuit a day—I was starving and—brute that I am!—thought of that alone."

"I tell you I needed it not," said Josce-

lyn, rousing himself. "And for the matter of that," he added, with laughter in his voice, "we shall soon have enough to drink without the trouble of stirring, for the wind is blowing up for rain."

"'Tis like you to jest while you are dying," said Dick.

Joscelyn was silent; a swift pang shot through his heart as he thought of Clemency's sorrow, but he was too much exhausted to feel very acutely, and just lay there quietly, Dick's hand locked fast in his. For a long time there had been perfect stillness, and in the darkness they could not tell whether the two armies still confronted each other. Suddenly Dick gave a violent start.

"Good Lord!" he cried, "they are beginning again!"

A sharp volley of small shot made the hills echo. It was promptly replied to by another volley, and Joscelyn and Dick wondered whether Waller was about to make an attempt to force the King's troops from the brow of the hill, which both felt

confident they must have gained. The thought of being trampled to death in that midnight gloom was not inspiriting, and it was with great relief that they found the firing was not resumed. There was no moon that night, and heavy clouds veiled the stars. The darkness was absolute, so that the two brothers could no longer even faintly discern each other. Presently the rain which Joscelyn had foretold came pouring down on them. For a time both were refreshed by it, and were able to talk connectedly, each gathering from the other what had passed since their last brief meeting at Winchester. Dick asked many questions about Whichcote, and listened to an account of Joscelyn's stay at North Cadbury, with what in a less lovable nature would have been envy. It certainly seemed to him that a rebel in company with such men as Hampden and Whichcote and Sir William Waller, and with such a bride as Clemency Coriton, had considerable advantage over most Royalists, and that there were some compensations for those who had

braved opinion and taken the unfashionable side. The two were as far as ever from understanding each other's standpoint. One still held vigorously to the duty of passive obedience in the subject, the other to the duty of active resistance of evil wherever it was found. But it was not of these matters that they now thought. Zeal for the King and zeal for the country had brought them into the shadow of death, but now having done their duty according to their lights they thought no more of the strife, but lying there on the trampled turf spoke of the quiet, undisturbed past at Cambridge, at Lincoln, at Winchester, and at Shortell.

Just before the dawn, when the heavy rain had ceased and an icy chill began to creep over them, there were long silences between the two. Each thought the end was not far off, but had faced death too often to fear it. As for Dick, in his simple fashion he took great comfort in being near one whom he had always recognised as being stronger and better than himself, and finding

his own mind all clouded by pain he instinctively turned to Joscelyn.

"Say a prayer for us," he begged faintly, "I can't remember one."

But no man in the last stage of exhaustion is capable of very great concentration of thought. Joscelyn could only murmur the first sentence of that "Godly prayer to be said at all times," which they had both been taught in childhood—"Honour and praise be given to Thee, O Lord God Almighty, most dear Father——" and there his powers failed him. Dick waited, but there was only silence, and once, a little later, the last three words repeated in a tone scarcely audible. Whether sleep or death or faintness had overpowered his brother he could not tell.

The next thing he knew was that the dreadful darkness had ended; he opened his eyes to see in the clear light of early morning the kindly face of his leader, Sir Ralph Hopton, bending over him. The General knew the story of the Heyworths, and, turning to the officer who was accom-

panying him round the field to visit the wounded, he drew his attention to Joscelyn.

"This," he said, "must be the officer that we saw cut off by Sir Bevil's pikemen while attempting to save a comrade. 'Twas his foe he tried to save, but they are brothers."

Then, seeing that Dick was conscious, he spoke to him very kindly, promising him aid as soon as it could be procured, and giving his word that Joscelyn should also have every attention.

"What of the battle, sir?" asked Dick.

Hopton's noble face clouded.

"We have gained the heights of Lansdown," he said, "and lost Sir Bevil Granville; they have borne him dying to Cold Ashton Vicarage. As for Waller, though he has fallen back upon Bath, he will certainly be strong enough to harass us greatly in the march to Oxford, and God knows we are but weak. There must have fallen on our side at least fourteen hundred in yesterday's fight, and the rebels have also suffered severely. May God grant us a speedy peace!"

He moved on to visit others upon the battle-field, and Dick lay longing for the promised aid, and trying to find some comfort in the assurance that the hand still clasped in his was not yet the hand of a dead man.

Suddenly he was startled by the sound of a terrible explosion which shook the ground, and forgetting his wound in the excitement he started up, only to fall back once more in a dead swoon. It appeared that a waggon containing eight barrels of powder had accidentally exploded, both Sir Ralph Hopton and Major Sheldon being grievously wounded and many others killed. Dick learnt the particulars later on when he once more returned to himself and found that he had been carried to a cottage at Marshfield, and that Jervis, with more good feeling than he had ever before evinced, was standing by while a surgeon dressed his wound.

"Where is Joscelyn?" he asked, looking round anxiously. "Sir Ralph promised he should be brought off the field."

Jervis shrugged his shoulders with an air of indifference that almost maddened poor Dick.

"I tell you," he cried, "he was wounded in trying to save me!"

And, with more energy than the surgeon at all approved of, he recounted what had passed on the battle-field.

"'Twas gallantly done," said Jervis, his manner changing. "Joscelyn is after all a Heyworth."

Going out into the village he made inquiries of the men who had borne Dick from Lansdown, and learnt that they had noticed a young Parliamentary officer close beside him there; whether he was dead or unconscious they could not tell, but they had been forced to unclasp his fingers, so rigidly were they closed on the other's hand.

"I will ride back to the field and search for him," said Arthur Denham, who had overheard the conversation.

Jervis hesitated for a moment, not because of the possible danger, but because his

better self struggled with the contemptuous hatred he had long felt for his brother. In the end the better nature conquered, and hastily mounting his horse he rode away with Denham and one of the soldiers who professed to know the exact spot where Dick had lain. The effort, however, proved of no avail; they searched the hillside in all directions, they made inquiries at Hamswell House, where many wounded Parliamentarians had been carried, but Joscelyn was nowhere to be found.

CHAPTER XIV.

O might we know! for sore we feel
  The languor of delay,
When sickness lets our fainter zeal
  Or foes block up our way.

Lord! who Thy thousand years dost wait
  To work the thousandth part
Of Thy vast plan, for us create
  With zeal, a patient heart.

J. H. Newman.

When Joscelyn came to himself that morning and found that Dick had been borne away from the field, he made sure that his brother was dead. But he was suffering such an agony of pain that he could only feel relief at the thought that Dick was out of the strife, and strong desire for his own release. Had it not been for Jack Morrison's energy and faithfulness he certainly would

have died; but Morrison had no sooner seen the departure of the Royalists than he hastened to the battle-field, and with the help of a sturdy farm-labourer whose services he had secured, he found his master and bore him across the down to the little Chapel Farm, once a rest-house for pilgrims to Glastonbury. Here Joscelyn was able to have his wound dressed in a rough fashion; the farm was already crowded with wounded men, and he thought himself fortunate to secure one of the stone benches in the porch, and the rough but effective handling of a barber-surgeon from Bath. The farmer's daughter brought him a tankard of home-brewed ale, and a little shock-headed boy crept up to him and thrust into his hand a great slice of black bread, looking down with a sort of fascination at his buff-coat all soaked with blood, and furtively touching the armour which Morrison had removed to the further corner of the porch. The food gradually revived him, and as he gained a firmer hold on life his craving for Clemency's presence gradually overpowered all

other feelings. He was dying, but he would at any rate die at Gloucester. He turned to his servant.

"What of Latimer?" he asked.

"Galloped riderless into the ranks last night, sir," said Morrison. "He was safely secured, and I stabled him in a barn here."

"Saddle him," said Joscelyn, "I am going to Gloucester."

Finding remonstrances of no use Morrison obeyed, leaving the surgeon and the farmer to argue with his master.

"Well," said the farmer, finding he could not prevail, "as you zay, zir, a man can but die once, and if zo be as you're zet on it, why you had better go by the Avon to Bristol. There be a kinsman of mine down yonder at Kelweston with a boat, and he'll pull you there before night if you'll give him zummat for the job."

In the end the good man arranged to walk with them to Kelweston, and to bring back the horses to the Chapel Farm, where they were to be stabled for the present. Whether Joscelyn would ever again need

Latimer seemed doubtful; indeed, as they rode down the long hill to the river, Morrison more than once thought he would have dropped dead from the saddle, and it was with many dark forebodings that the old farmer parted with him, having seen him safely embarked for Bristol. The comparative ease of lying in the bottom of the boat soon, however, revived him; he began to hear the talk between Morrison and the two boatmen.

"What makes un zo zet on reaching Gloucester?" said one.

"Humph," grunted the other, with an indescribable ejaculation. "'Tis a wench, I dare zwear."

"In truth you're not far wrong," said Morrison, "there is to be a wedding there anon."

"Wedding!" exclaimed the gruff old boatman, "more like to be a burial! Do you zee yon ztream flowing into river? Well, there be a place there called Wedding, for a while ago a bride was a-going to be married, when zhe and all her coompany

were turned into ztones, and there they ztand to this day high and mighty ztones all in a zircle."

This curious old tradition haunted Joscelyn for the rest of the weary journey. Arrived at Bristol, he was transferred to another boat, and after a wearisome delay on account of the tide he at last found himself going up the Severn, drawing nearer and nearer to the gabled house which he had set his heart on reaching. Yet when the next day they reached the landing-stage at Gloucester, and he heard Morrison sending a messenger to warn Mr. Bennett of their arrival, he felt as if the old story were about to repeat itself, and that this time a bridegroom would be turned to stone. One sob of agony escaped him as the men lifted him from the boat, but the pain and exhaustion dulled his senses as he was borne through the streets, and his mind became entirely occupied with the dogged resolution that he would not let himself die till he had seen Clemency.

And now, at last, he caught a glimpse of the cathedral; Christopher Bennett and a

surgeon came hurrying to meet him; his cold lips would not frame themselves to answer their questions. He saw the ivy-covered house, the narrow entrance lobby; he saw Faith eagerly welcoming him, and holding to his lips some strong cordial, with the assurance that he must take it before being borne up-stairs.

"Clemency," he faltered, looking round with questioning eyes and a stifling sense of terror, as the thought crossed his mind that after all she might have left Gloucester.

"She is above, with Charlotte, preparing your room," said Faith.

He signed to his bearers to move on; but the ascent of the steep stairs proved so torturing to him that his exhausted powers utterly gave way, and in the very moment of attaining his wish he lost consciousness, darkness hemming him in just as Clemency drew near to greet him. As if from a great distance he heard her sweet, firm voice saying to the bearers—"Put him down here—gently—very gently."

Then, for many hours, he lay like one

dead, while the best surgeons that Gloucester could furnish did their utmost for him.

The surgery was rough, but Clemency and Charlotte were born nurses, and Joscelyn being blessed with a fine constitution struggled through. Once or twice during the night he seemed to see the faces of the watchers about his bed, but his fevered brain realised nothing clearly. His first true sight of Clemency was early the next morning, when, after an interval of uneasy sleep, he woke to find the room all golden-red with the glow of sunrise. The window looked towards the east, and Clemency knelt there after the custom of Daniel, the mellow light making a glory of her dark chestnut hair, and softening the pallor and weariness of her face. The night had been full of terrible anxiety, but this glorious dawn of day had filled her with hope, and Joscelyn, in dreamy content, thought it heaven itself just to lie there in perfect stillness watching her.

When, by and by, she rose quietly and stole across to the bed-side, that strange

unearthly calm was still unbroken; they met with a peaceful rapture, a fulness of joy, which seemed like a foretaste of the Day of Resurrection.

* * * * *

"You did well to come to Gloucester," said the shrewd old surgeon, a day or two later. "The journey would have killed most men, but I doubt if any one but Mistress Clemency could have brought you round."

Clemency's sweet face lighted up with pleasure at the old man's words, a delicate colour mantled in her cheeks; it seemed to her that for the first time since she had given up her diamonds she had been able in some direct way to serve the country, and this was a way so entirely after her own heart!

But she never realised that it was not only by her good nursing and loving care that she was able to save her lover, never knew how those weeks of close companionship rescued him from the bitterness and wrath and hatred that had been stirred up

in his heart by the treachery of Colonel Hurry and the conduct of the King. Whichcote's words had begun the work of healing, the attempt to save Dick had carried it on, but it was left to Clemency to complete the cure and to keep her betrothed from falling a victim to that sourness of temper which marred too many of the Puritans, and which had threatened, in the time of his grief, to cast a shadow over Joscelyn's career.

Spite of all the bodily suffering, spite even of his great sorrow for Dick—a sorrow which naturally increased as his own hold upon life grew stronger—there was much of exquisite happiness in those days of his illness. One afternoon, about the middle of July, Clemency was sitting by the bedside, fair and fresh in her white gown, holding in her hand a tiny volume bound in undressed leather; it was Warwick's *Spare Minutes*, and at times she read a few sentences, at times paused to talk to the invalid.

"Here is a piece all about robins," she

exclaimed, a smile playing about her lips. "Do you remember how on the day of our betrothal we heard them singing in the little wood?"

"As we sat under the yew tree, on that moss-grown bank!" said Joscelyn. "How many thousand times have I not lived it all over again!"

"Then hark to what he says about them," said Clemency, and she read the following lines—"'As oft as I hear the robin-redbreast chant it as cheerfully in September, the beginning of winter, as in March, the approach of summer, why should not we (think I) give as cheerful entertainment to the hoary, frosty hairs of our age's winter, as to the primroses of our youth's spring? Why not to the declining sun in adversity, as (like Persians) to the rising sun of prosperity? I am sent to the ant, to learn industry; to the dove, to learn innocency; to the serpent, to learn wisdom; and why not to this bird to learn equanimity and patience, and to keep the same tenor of my mind's quietness, as well at the ap-

proach of calamity's winter as of the spring of happiness? And, since the Roman's constancy is so commended, who changed not his countenance with his changed fortunes, why should not I, with a Christian resolution, hold a steady course in all weathers, and though I be forced with cross winds to shift my sails, and catch at side winds, yet skilfully to steer, and keep on my course, by the "Cape of Good Hope," till I arrive at the haven of eternal happiness?' "

As she ended the page there came a knock at the door, and Christopher Bennett entered.

"I have unlooked-for news to tell you," he said. "Sir William Waller is below, and would fain speak with you."

Joscelyn was so astounded by these tidings that he scarcely knew whether the General's presence boded good or ill, but as Waller entered the room one glance at his worn, harassed face told him that some terrible disaster must have happened.

Greeting Clemency with the chivalrous

courtesy which he invariably showed to women, he approached the bed, his face brightening as he looked down at the wounded man.

"Come!" he exclaimed. "You seem better than I had dared to hope; in fact, we had given you up for lost when we learnt in what a plight you had left the Chapel Farm on Lansdown. This is one gleam of good fortune to cheer us in our great gloom."

"You have been defeated, sir?" asked Joscelyn, hardly able to believe that the Conqueror had at last met his match.

"Hopelessly defeated at Roundway Down," said Waller, his face darkening; "our foot mostly made prisoners, our horse destroyed and scattered."

"What! Sir Arthur Hazlerigg's regiment!" cried Joscelyn. "The men that struck such terror into the hearts of the Cavaliers but a few days since?"

"We deemed them well-nigh invincible," said Waller, "and with over-great ardour and rashness charged right up the steep

hillside where never a horse set foot before. It was a miserable mistake. They were repulsed, and you may thank the Lord you were not there to see that noble band driven down headlong to their destruction! 'Twill haunt me to my last day. But this is no talk for a sick-room. There rallied round me the poor remnant of the cavalry, and we retreated as best might be to Bristol. Hazlerigg lies desperately wounded, and I am making all speed to London by this, the only route now open to us, through Gloucester, Warwick, and Newport Pagnell."

"Is it possible that Sir Ralph Hopton was strong enough for this, when his army had been shattered on Lansdown?" said Joscelyn, listening pale and breathless to Waller's story.

"Nay, Hopton was cooped up in Devizes," said Sir William, "and we had made sure of taking the town, having defeated the first relief sent them from Oxford under my Lord Crawford; but a large new force was sent from Oxford under Wilmot, and they have annihilated our army."

"What was my Lord Essex about that he did not stir to aid you, sir?" asked Joscelyn.

"He was lying within ten miles of Oxford with his whole army," said Waller, bitterly, "yet suffered the entire strength of that place to march thirty miles to our destruction without so much as sending out a party to follow them, or to alarm Oxford, by which they would have been probably recalled. But Mistress Clemency will not forgive me if I stay here agitating you thus. The times are dark, but we must not despair. I haste to London to try to raise new troops. By the by, I have with me a prisoner taken at Devizes, your quondam gaoler, Captain Denham. He might easily enough have given us the slip the other day in the confusion, but he was on parole, and I thought instead of leaving him at Bristol with the other officers taken the same day, to carry him to London to arrange for his ransom or exchange. Methinks, however, one good turn deserves another, and that we shall perhaps save him from much dis-

comfort if we permit him to remain here in Gloucester; his case runs less risk of being forgotten."

In the end it was arranged that Arthur Denham should remain under the charge of Mr. Bennett, a prisoner on parole, contributing the usual sum for his keep, and Joscelyn eagerly welcomed him, hoping to gain the details of Dick's end. The young Royalist was naturally in excellent spirits. His party was triumphing all over the country; through Waller's courtesy he was likely to have an easy time of it as prisoner; and, besides, he was delighted to meet with Joscelyn.

"This is indeed unlooked for," he said, grasping the wounded man's hand; "I would that we had any means of letting your brother know that you still live."

"Jervis will care little enough whether I am dead or alive," said Joscelyn.

"Nay, there you wrong him," said Denham, "for I rode back with him from Marshfield to Lansdown on purpose to search for you."

"He did that for me!" cried Joscelyn, in astonishment. "I had not thought it of him! Well, he and I are the only ones left now. Belike 'twas that softened him."

"He was moved by your gallant effort to rescue Dick," said Denham, "and partly maybe because Dick was in such grief that you had not been borne with him to Marshfield."

"Dick lived to be carried to Marshfield?" cried Joscelyn, starting up with eager hope.

Clemency, much alarmed at his excitement, hastened to soothe him.

"Tell him quickly, sir, does Dick yet live?" she cried. "We deemed him dead."

"As far as I know he lives," said Denham. "He was doing well when we left Marshfield, and he was in a farm-house where the good folk promised to take excellent care of him. What! you had given him up? Yes, yes, I see; he was borne away soon after the explosion that maimed Sir Ralph and has proved the death of Major Sheldon; you were both of you unconscious. 'Twas

natural enough that you should think his wound had proved mortal."

Joscelyn could not speak; for some time he lay with closed eyes, fearfully exhausted by this sudden and bewildering relief from a sorrow that had been daily increasing in weight. By and by he looked up at Clemency with a smile.

"Dear heart," he said, "you were right in bidding me to keep on my course 'by the Cape of Good Hope.'"

Joscelyn had only just left his bed for the first time when the news reached Gloucester that Bristol was besieged by Prince Rupert. A few days later they learnt that the governor, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, after enduring the most violent assault, had sent out to offer a surrender, before, in the opinion of many, surrender was absolutely necessary; the hearts of those in Gloucester sank.

It was late in the afternoon that Christopher Bennett brought the ill tidings; Clemency and Faith sat with their needlework in the withdrawing-room, while Joscelyn, propped up in an arm-chair, was playing a

game of chess with Denham, and looking, as Faith laughingly remarked, much like a gay garment that had lost its colour in the wash. He turned a shade paler when he heard that Bristol, the second city in the kingdom, had surrendered.

"All men blame Colonel Fiennes," cried Christopher Bennett, "and if I mistake not he will be called to account for what seems much like cowardice."

"Nay, there you wrong him," cried Joscelyn; "no one who had served with him could doubt his courage. I will never believe that it was more than an error of judgment. Ignorant of military matters he doubtless may have been, but false to his trust, never. What were the terms of the surrender?"

"They were reasonable enough, but they were not observed," said Mr. Bennett. "Every house on the bridge was plundered, and the most shameful excesses perpetrated by the soldiers, much against the wish of Prince Rupert, it is said."

"Our own soldiers were not blameless

when they took Reading," said Joscelyn, "if report speaks truth; though 'twas not so bad as this you tell of Bristol. It is to be hoped that the Parliament will deal more generously with Colonel Fiennes than the King did with his unlucky governor of Reading. For my part I would put more trust in the honour of Colonel Fiennes than in the honour of your Governor Massey, though doubtless Massey is the better soldier."

"We shall soon make full proof of his qualities," said Christopher Bennett, with a sigh; "for, by fair means or foul, Gloucester will now most surely be attempted."

Arthur Denham looked from one to another of those present; utter panic was plainly shown in Faith's pretty face; Clemency's lips quivered and her hazel eyes grew bright with unshed tears as she glanced towards her lover, evidently thinking how little he was fitted to bear the hardships of a siege; gloom and anxiety clouded Christopher Bennett's honest brow. The young Cavalier looked across the chess-

board at his antagonist, fully understanding Clemency's fears. But he found that the man who had so lately been at death's door was precisely the one who was ready to face death a second time with intrepid front. Joscelyn's languid, exhausted look had entirely changed, his face was aglow, his eyes full of steady purpose; he turned to Clemency, with a glad smile which she never forgot, and exclaimed—

"Sweetheart, 'tis through you that I am healed in time to serve!"

It was the same contagious calmness which had nerved her failing heart on the night of the attack at Katterham, and she came now and stood beside him, stooping to kiss his forehead, glad to feel his strong arm encircling her, and utterly ignoring the presence of the others.

Denham discreetly became absorbed in his next move, and in a few minutes the sound of a rebeck playing the Hundredth Psalm made the two lovers conscious of the outer world.

"'Tis Temperance Turner," cried Clem-

ency, and running down-stairs she returned with shining eyes, bearing two letters from Katterham and one from Rosamond at Shortell, which Denham regarded jealously.

The letters, though they brought good accounts, caused no little perplexity. Sir Robert Neal, writing directly the news of Waller's defeat had reached him, strongly urged the advisability of Clemency's marriage at the next opportunity, and his words naturally chimed in with the wishes of Joscelyn. Still, in that desperate time of danger and uncertainty, there were many reasons which made an honourable man hesitate before binding another to his fate. Sitting by the open window on that July evening, watching the light as it fell on the pinnacles and old cathedral walls, the two lovers quietly talked out the whole matter, while Faith and her husband went to visit Alderman Pury, the leading spirit among the Independents of the city, and Denham amused himself in the oak parlour by writing a letter to his child-love at Shortell.

"'Tis true," said Joscelyn, "that Sir

Robert urges the unsettled times and the dark prospects of the Parliamentarians as one reason for wishing our marriage to take place at once. He spoke of it when I saw him a month ago. But the question is, does he fully realise how dark our future seems? And do you, dear heart, truly desire to link your fortunes irrevocably with one as deeply compromised as I am?"

"Do you think," said Clemency, smiling reproachfully, "that I am—as some folks say Governor Massey is—desirous only to stand with those who succeed?"

"It is no mere question of success or failure in battle," said Joscelyn. "If Gloucester falls now, all men think that the utter ruin of the Parliament cause must follow. That, for me, means poverty, exile, or imprisonment, or even, maybe, worse. Do you do wisely to take as husband one who may, as likely as not, end his life on the gallows?"

Clemency shuddered, yet the terrible words only made her cling to him the more closely.

"'Tis unlike you to think of failure," she said. "Why dwell on the dark side?"

"For your sake," said Joscelyn, "lest, through my very love for you, I mar your life. Mr. Bennett does not deem it possible that you and your sister should travel speedily to Katterham while things are in their present state, or that might prove the safest plan for you."

"What!" cried Clemency. "Would you have me leave you here with your wound but just healed and the enemy at the gates? That would be to expose me to miseries far worse than in the longest siege. We women are not chattels of value to be stored in safe hiding-places! If you and I may not be friends and helpmates to each other I will never wed you."

Joscelyn's grave, thoughtful expression remained unchanged. He seemed to be holding himself in check, to be encased in armour which she could not penetrate.

"Even," he said, "if Massey be true to us, if there lurked no hint in that reply of his last spring to Prince Rupert, that he

would never yield to a *foreign* prince—even if one could put strong confidence in a man who avows himself a soldier of fortune rather than one who acts on principle—you must remember that Gloucester is ill-prepared for a siege. The powder is scarce, the fortifications miserably defective, the garrison is small and dispirited, and many of the citizens are on the enemy's side. I have heard folk say it could not hold out for a couple of days."

"Then," said Clemency, her hazel eyes looking fearlessly into his, "for those days, my beloved, we shall be together, and afterwards—let come what may!"

At that his armour fell from him, he caught her to his breast.

"Have I not skilfully played the advocate against myself, dear heart," he said, "rivalling a lawyer in his bar-gown? Now, be both judge and jury, and let me hear your verdict. Is it meet that you should wed this rebel, who already hath been piked through the body, and may likely enough be one day quartered? If you return a

verdict in his favour, then name the day for his happiness to begin."

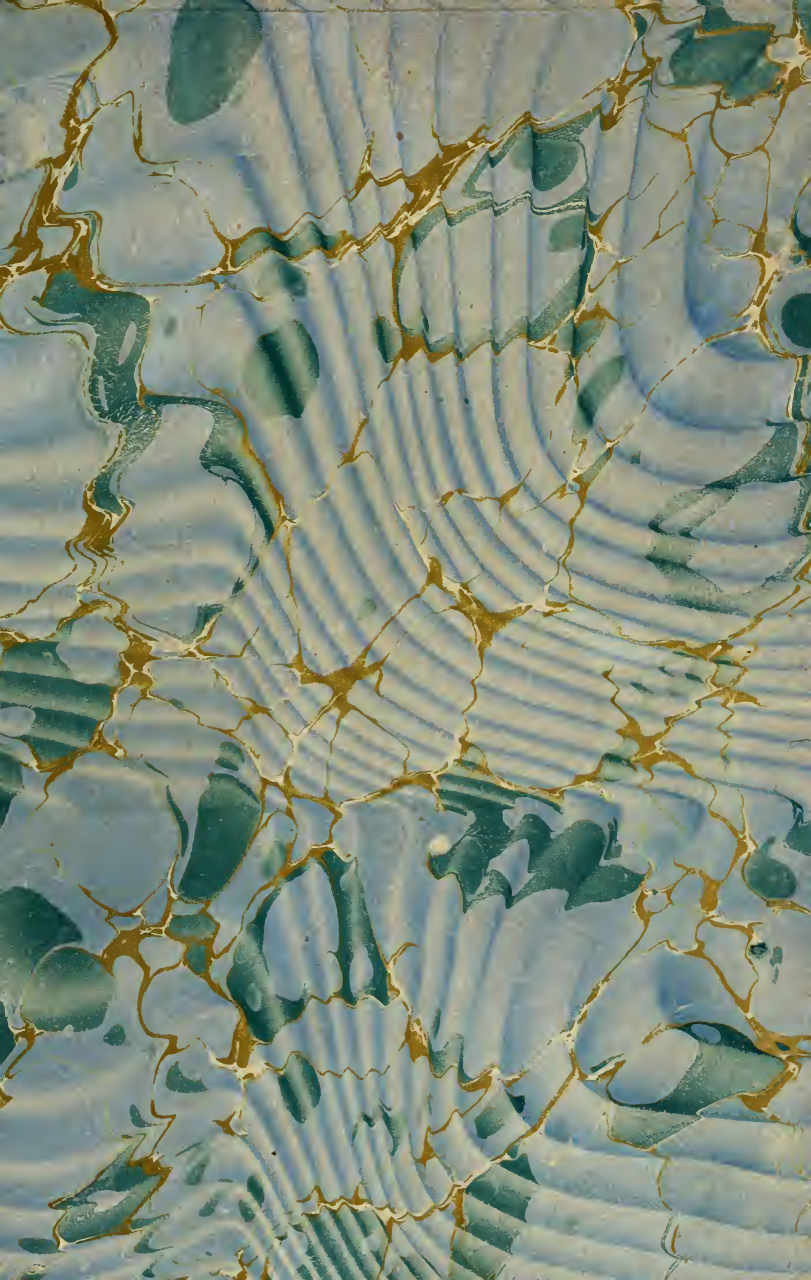
"We need no bride-laces, or bride-cake, or fine array," said Clemency, her colour deepening. "Let it be as soon as we can find a minister to read the service. How I wish that it could be your former tutor, Mr. Whichcote!"

And in the end this was arranged. Morrison set off next day for Bath to fetch the horses from Lansdown, learnt at Marshfield that Dick had recovered and left the farm-house, and then rode on to North Cadbury, bearing a letter with his master's request. Whichcote gladly consented to come to the marriage of his old pupil, and on Thursday, the third day of August, he rode into Gloucester, to the great delight of the household in College Green.

Could they but have glanced at the Council of War being held at that very time by the Royalists at Bristol, they would have learnt that the siege of Gloucester had been definitely decided upon, a messenger having just arrived with a secret message from

Massey that he wished the King well; that if Prince Rupert brought an army against Gloucester he would defend it; but that if the King himself came with his army he would not hold out against him.

END OF VOLUME II.



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